SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

EDUCATION OF LOVE

MOHIT CHAKRABARTI

Education today is now in utter ukase. To say about education of love is almost a myth at present. But nearly two hundred years ago Swami Vivekananda has made his clarion call to launch vibrant programmes of education of love that caters to freedom, service to society, humanism, spirituality and, above all, mystic effulgence of serenity and poignancy. A look inward and look sacred with the philosophy of education of love as Vivekananda prescribes and stimulates is the only alternative to avert the missing link of dynamic, man-making and character-building education.

A pioneering and profound study on the educational philosophy of Swami Vivekananda.

CONTENTS

Preface

- Philosophy of Education of Love: Vivekananda's Vision
- Education of Love and Freedom: Vivekananda's Forethoughts
- Education of Love and Society: Vivekananda's Introspection
- Education of Love and Humanism: Vivekananda's Beckoning
- Education of Love and Spirituality: Vivekananda's Inwardness
- Education of Love and Mysticism: Vivekananda's Quest

Index

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Dedicated
to
SWAMI PRABHANANDA
Secretary
Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture
Kolkata

Dr. Manas Kumar Bhattacharya
Sub-Divisional Hospital Bolpur
Birbhum

Preface

Education in theory and practice right now is sans love sans quest. It has already become dull, mechanical, rigid, passive and poignancy-shy. It has also become involvement without prudence, and exercise without evolution of consciousness. Apart from the fact that all education is a means of liberation endless, enlivening, encapsulating and definitely absorbing, the component of love has been alarmingly absconded, pirated, poisoned and ostracised from the altar of learning and teaching.

Interestingly, the educational scenario as above is not altogether different from what it was in the two centuries earlier in the colonial era. The West, too, has more or less presented us with the same dismal picture, where education is pawned to puerile commercialisation heavily banking upon affluence and extravagance. It is at this juncture that the vibrant philosophy of education of Swami Vivekananda has brought forth a sea-change in education in general and education of love in particular.

Significantly, Vivekananda never cares for education for so-called excellence but education for poignancy and perfection. He also goes a step further for 'manifestation of perfection already in man'. He emphasises on involvement and evolution, awakening and reawakening of the vision of man the unknown and divine. He cares for cultivation of love and sympathy, not because these because these abstract components are merely bonds of human relationship but essentially because these are components of the education of the heart and the soul in unison with the All-Heart and All-Soul. This education of love as Vivekananda advocates is actually a new realisation of the image of man, an embodiment of All-Love.

Admittedly, Vivekananda welcomes freedom in education where the meaning of society goes a radical and revolutionary change. The peerless and incomparable Wandering Monk has travelled extensively, preached the religion of education for service to humans, shown absorbing inroads to inner consciousness in spirituality and explores and identifies himself in the serene mystic quest for Thou art That—*Tat Tvamhosi*. "Philosophy of Education of Love: Vivekananda's Vision" is an extensive study on all these diverse dimensions.

"Education of Love and Freedom: Vivekananda's Fore-thoughts" and "Education of Love and Society: Vivekananda's Introspection" unfold a sparkling arena of Vivekananda's unparalleled thoughts and suggestions on how to make a fusion between love and freedom in the pursuit of education that promises an enlightened and challenging society.

That true humanism beckons a radical and revolutionary approach to bringing about the dynamic and vibrant vision of man in symphony with the education of love has been discussed in detail in "Education of Love and Humanism: Vivekananda's Beckoning".

"Education of Love and Spirituality: Vivekananda's Inwardness" is an intensive study on how Vivekananda eyes and ennobles education of love that continually cares for and profoundly contributes to the ascent and excellence of man.

The education of love is by nature a mystic quest. It is a quest that promises serenity and beyond that in which the meaning of void as Vivekananda explores and intensifies in all catholicity of evolutionary and poignant vision welcomes the essence of education: Thou art That. "Education of Love and Mysticism: Vivekananda's Quest" might reward the revered readers with sparkling avenues of advancement in education as it ought to be right now.

I am greatly indebted to Sobdo Chakrabarti, my son, who has done a lot in computer service for the book.

I do firmly believe that all creative activities, for worthwhile illumination and completion, always depend on an ever alive and loving force who is none but my wife, Pranati Chakrabarti. Now that she is in her heaven, leaving behind that infinite strength to be translated in ardent devotion to education, I recall her soul-stirring words of endless inspiration with baffled shedding of solitary tears of happiness in this creative work.

If the book is considered to be a worthwhile contribution to the educational philosophy of Swami Vivekananda and provides me with the erudite comments of every respected reader, I would compliment myself with the invaluable words: "Arise,awake and stop not till the goal is reached."

Mohit Chakrabarti

Seemantika, Seemanto Palli
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Contents

Preface vii

1. Philosophy of Education of Love: Vivekananda's Vision 1

2. Education of Love and Freedom: Vivekananda's Forethoughts 23

3. Education of Love and Society: Vivekananda's Introspection 39

4. Education of Love and Humanism: Vivekananda's Beckoning 52

5. Education of Love and Spirituality: Vivekananda's Inwardness 66

6. Education of Love and Mysticism: Vivekananda's Quest 81

Index 94

1

Philosophy of Education of Love: Vivekananda's Vision

Education is a means of development. To Swami Vivekananda, it is more than mere development. It is a quest external and internal. It is also more than a quest. It is an endless lesson of precious nothingness—fullness in void—where the 'We' merges into 'I' and vice versa. It makes a beginning from everywhere in order to be blessed in nowhere perfection.

Vivekananda's philosophy of education in terms of love is primarily based on the theory of self-discipline for self-advancement that always welcomes and exercises altruism. As a result, non-attachment becomes the pivotal factor in the education of love. As he advises:

> Work as if you were a stranger in this land, a sojourner; work incessantly, but do not bind yourselves; bondage is terrible. This world is not our habitation, it is only one of the stages through which we are passing. Remember that great saying of the Sankhya, "The whole of nature is for the soul, not the soul for nature." The very reason of nature's existence is for the education of the soul; it has no other meaning; it is there because the soul must have knowledge, and through knowledge free itself. If we remember this always, we shall never be attached to nature; we shall know that nature is a book in which we are to read, and that when we have gained the required knowledge, the book is of no more value to us. Instead of that, however, we are identifying ourselves with

> nature; we are thinking the soul is for nature, that the spirit is for the flesh, and, as the common saying has it, we think that man "lives to eat" and not "eats to live". We are continually making this mistake; we are regarding nature as ourselves and are becoming attached to it; and as soon as this attachment comes, there is the deep impression on the soul, which binds us down and makes us work not from freedom but like slaves.[1]

To be attached to work as slaves is to bid farewell to the education of love. Vivekananda reminds us of the fact that from attachment selfishness is born and it eats up all sacred visions of the education of love. Moreover, it is not possible to make spiritual advancement with an attached and selfish mind. As he significantly remarks on how to build a sound platform of education of love amongst:

> Do you ask anything from your children in return for what you have given them? It is your duty to work for them, and there the matter ends. In whatever you do for a particular person, a city, or a state, assume the same attitude towards it as you have towards your children—expect nothing in return. If you can invariably take the position of a giver, in which everything given by you is a free offering to the world, without any thought in return, then will your work bring you no attachment. Attachment comes only where we expect a return.
>
> If working like slaves results in selfishness and attachment, working as a master of our own mind gives rise to the bliss of non-attachment. We often talk of right and justice, but we find that in the world right and justice are mere baby's talk. There are two things which guide the conduct of men: might and mercy. The exercise of might is invariably the exercise of selfishness. All men and women try to make the most of whatever power or advantage they have. Mercy is heaven itself; to be good, we have all to be merciful.

> Even justice and right should stand on mercy. All thought of obtaining return for the work to do hinders our spiritual progress; nay, in the end it brings misery. There is another way in which this idea of mercy and selfless charity can be put into practice; that is, by looking upon work as "worship" in case we believe in a Personal God. Here we give up all the fruits of our work unto the Lord, and worshipping Him thus, we have no right to expect anything from mankind for the work we do. The Lord Himself works incessantly and is ever without attachment. Just as water cannot wet the lotus leaf, so work cannot bind the unselfish man by giving rise to attachment to results. The selfless and unattached man may live in the very heart of a crowded and sinful city; he will not be touched by sin.[2]

The education of love that Vivekananda upholds is love that eliminates the self and sticks sincerely to love for love's sake only. This is one of the most vital points of how to be truly educated in the spirit of love. This love is majestic. It never suffers from poverty of magnanimity and broad vision of altruism. It becomes a passion for the learner and translator of love to eliminate beggarly gain that kills all good sense and sensibilities in quest of the All Love. Vivekananda exquisitely elucidates on this as follows:

> Begging is not the language of love. To worship God even for the sake of salvation or any other rewards equally degenerate. Love knows no reward. Love is always for love's sake. The Bhakta loves because he cannot help loving. When you see a beautiful scenery and fall in love with it, you do not demand anything in way of favour from the scenery, nor does the scenery demand anything from you. Yet the vision thereof brings you to a blissful state of the mind; it tones down all the friction in your soul, it makes you calm, almost raises you, for the time being, beyond your mortal nature and places you in a condition of quite divine ecstasy. This nature of divine love is the first angle of

> our triangle. Ask not anything in return for your love; let your position be always that of a giver; give your love unto God, but do not ask anything in return even from Him.[3]

The education of love is also necessary for negotiating fear. In fact, love is such a driving force in every action and contemplation that whenever we are afraid of any impending danger or constraint in our life, it serves as a potential force to face all eventualities even at the cost of death. Vivekananda encourages us to learn the lesson of love with all sincerity and devotion, since it ensures purity and perfection in all walks of life. Even love for God must be blessed with the fine lesson of religion of love. In his own words:

> It is a degradation to worship God through fear of punishment; such worship is, if worship at all, the crudest form of the worship of love. So long as there is any fear in the heart, how can there be love also? Love conquers naturally all fear. Think of a young mother in the street and a dog barking at her; she is frightened and flies into nearest house. But suppose the next day she is in the street with her child, and a lion springs upon the child. Where will be her position now? Of course, in the very mouth of the lion, protecting her child. Love conquers all fear. Fear comes from the selfish idea of cutting one's self off from the universe. The smaller and the more selfish I make myself, the more is my fear. If a man thinks he is a little nothing, fear will surely come upon him. And the less you think of yourself as an insignificant person, the less fear there will be for you. So long as there is the least spark of fear in you there can be no love there. Love and fear are incompatible; God is never to be feared any of those who love Him. The commandment, "Do not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain", the true lover of God laughs at. How can there be any blasphemy in the religion of love?[4]

Vivekananda initiates a new lesson of love where hatred has never any room for expression or involvement. In fact, his principle of how to become religious is to welcome the diverse avenues of love for the All Serene and embrace others' religions as one's natural religion. In his discourse on the *Gita*, Chapter III, 35, he adroitly elucidates:

> No two persons have the same mind or the same body. * * * No two persons have the same religion. * * *
>
> If you want to be religious, enter not the gate of any organised religions. They do a hundred times more evil than good, because they stop the growth of each one's individual development. Study everything, but keep your own seat firm. If you take my advice, do not put your neck into the trap. The moment they try to put their noose on you, get your neck out and go somewhere else. [As] the bee culling from many flowers remains free, not bound by any flower, be not bound. * * * Enter not the door of any organised religion. [Religion] is only between you and your God, and no third person must come between you. Think what these organised religions have done! What Napoleon was more terrible than those religious persecutions? * * * If you and I organise, we begin to hate every person. It is better not to love, if loving only means hating others. That is no love. That is hell! If loving your own people means hating everybody else, it is the quintessence of selfishness and brutality, and the effect is that it will make you brutes. Therefore, better die working out your own natural religion than following another's natural religion, however great it may appear to you.[5]

To teach children the lesson of love is one of the fundamental ends-in-view of education. It demands sincerity of purpose. It also demands self-sacrifice. Accordingly, Vivekananda inspires us to cultivate and disseminate the education of love for self-sacrifice. With a series of queries, he unfolds the importance of universal love which should be a potent force in our endeavour at education of the child in exercising altruism in a fearless mind:

Is it not the most virtuous deed to sacrifice the happiness of one, the welfare of one, for the sake of the many? Exactly, but as the Bengali adage goes, "Can beauty be manufactured by rubbing and scrubbing? Can love be generated by effort and compulsion?" What glory is there in the renunciation of an eternal beggar? What virtue is there in the sense-control of one devoid of sense-power? What again is the self-sacrifice of one devoid of idea, devoid of heart, devoid of high ambition, and devoid of the conception of what constitutes society? What expression of devotedness to a husband is there by forcing a widow to commit Sati? Why make people do virtuous deeds by teaching superstitions? I say, liberate, undo the shackles of people as much as you can. Can dust be washed by dirt? Can bondage be removed by bondage? Where is the instance? When you would be able to sacrifice all desire for happiness for the sake of society, then you would be the Buddha, then you would be free: that is far off. Again, do you think the way to do it lies through oppression? "Oh, what examples of self-denial are our widows! Oh, how sweet is child-marriage! Is another such custom possible! Can there be anything but love between husband and wife in such a marriage!"—such is the whine going around nowadays. But as to the men, the masters of the situation, there is no need of self-denial for them! Is there a virtue higher than serving others? But the same does not apply to Brahmins—you others do it! The truth is that in this country parents and relatives can ruthlessly sacrifice the best interests of their children and others for their own selfish ends to save themselves by compromise to society; and the teaching of generations rendering the mind callous has made it perfectly easy. He, the brave alone, can deny self. The coward, afraid of the lash, with one hand wipes his eyes and gives with the other. Of what avail are such gifts? It is a far cry to love universal. The young plant should be hedged in and taken care of. One can hope gradually to attain to

> universal love if one can learn to love one object unselfishly.[6]

The lesson of the all-absorbing love that Vivekananda highlights in his philosophy of the education of love is the key to exercise universal love. It also leads to the great component of love which is self-surrender to the All Love. In such a state of love, one is blessed with the love of everyone irrespective of friendship or enmity as it apparently transpires. Vivekananda explains this lesson of the philosophy of love in terms of the existence of God in every human being. As he characteristically observes:

> God is the Samasthi, and this visible universe is God differentiated and made manifest. If we love this sum total, we love everything. Loving the world and doing it good will all come easily then; we have to obtain this power only by loving God first; otherwise it is no joke to do good to the world. "Everything is His and He is my lover; I love Him," says the Bhakta. In this way everything becomes sacred to the Bhakta, because all things are His. All are His children, His body, His manifestation. How the may we hurt any one? How then may we not love any one? With the love of God will come, as a sure effect, the love of every one in the universe. The nearer we approach God, the more do we begin to see that all things are in Him. When the soul succeeds in approaching the bliss of this supreme love, it also begins to see Him in everything. Our heart will thus become an eternal fountain of love. And when we reach even higher states of this love, all the little differences between the things of the world are entirely lost; man is seen no more as man, but only as God; the animal is seen no more as animal, but as God; even the tiger is no more a tiger, but a manifestation of God. Thus in this intense state of Bhakti, worship is offered to every one, to every life, and to every being...

As a result of this kind of intense all-absorbing love, comes the feeling of perfect self-surrender, the

> conviction that nothing that happens is against us, Apratikulya. Then the loving soul is able to say, if pain comes, "Welcome pain." If misery comes, it will say, "Welcome misery, you are the form of the Beloved." If a serpent comes, it will say, "Welcome serpent." If death comes, such a Bhakta will welcome it with a smile. "Blessed am I that they all come to me; they are all welcome." The Bhakta in this state of perfect resignation, arising out of intense love to God and to all that are His, ceases to distinguish between pleasure and pain in so far as they affect him. He does not know what it is to complain of pain or misery; and this kind of uncomplaining resignation to the will of God, who is all love, is indeed a worthier acquisition than all the glory of grand and heroic performances.[7]

Purification of mental attitude is the essential component of education of love. Vivekananda, therefore, urges on devotion to and love for work as the perfect means of exercising purification of mind. To consider everything of this world as good then becomes a natural and spontaneous lesson of love. Thus a positive approach to love for the world as well as work ensures nearness to the All Love. The lesson of love for God for love's sake unfolds a new chapter in the education of work.

In his lecture on Krishna delivered in California on April 1, 1900, Vivekananda elucidates on the above as follows:

> Various sorts of worship we see in this world. The sick man is very worshipful to God. There is the man who loses his fortune; he also prays very much, to get money. The highest worship is that of the man who loves God for God's sake. [The question may be asked:] "Why should there be so much sorrow if there is a God?" The worshipper replies! "There is misery in the world; [but] because of that I do not cease to love God. I do not worship Him to take away my [misery]. I love Him because He is love itself." The other [types of worship] are lower-grade; but Krishna has no

> condemnation for anything. It is better to do something than to stand still. The man who begins to worship God will grow by degrees and begin to love God for love's sake.
>
> How to attain purity living this life? Shall we all go to the forest caves? What good would it do? If the mind is not under control, it is no use living in a cave because the same mind will bring all disturbances there. We will find twenty devils in the cave because all the devils are in the mind. If the mind is under control, we can have the cave anywhere, wherever we are.
>
> It is our own mental attitude which makes the world what it is for us. Our thoughts make things beautiful, our thoughts make things ugly. The whole world is in our minds. Learn to see things in the proper light. First, believe in this world—that there is meaning behind everything. Everything in the world is good, is holy and beautiful. If you see something evil, think that you are not understanding it in the right light. Throw the burden on yourselves! Whenever we are tempted to say that the world is going to the dogs, we ought to analyse ourselves, and we shall find that we have lost the faculty of seeing things as they are.[8]

The intrinsic philosophy of education of love as Vivekananda advocates refers to the fact that the divine ideal of love as represented by humankind is the highest and the strongest manifestation of human nature. Known in the Indian philosophy of love as *Madhura* or sweet, this upholds the lesson of love as most elegant and supreme in identifying and realising the All Love in unison with action and contemplation. In such an education of love, one learns how to orient and transform oneself so that love becomes one's only identity to everyone anywhere or everywhere. Vivekananda characteristically exposes this human representation of love as follows:

> It is indeed based on the highest manifestation of love in this world, and this love is also the strongest known

> to man. What love shakes the whole nature of man, what love runs through every atom of his being—makes him mad, makes him forget his own nature, transforms him, makes him either a God or a demon—as the love man and woman? In this sweet representation of divine love God is our husband. We are all women; there are no men in this world; there is but One man, and this is He, our Beloved. All that love which man gives to woman, or woman to man, has here to be given to the Lord.
>
> All the different kinds of love which we see in the world, and with which we are more or less playing merely, have God as the goal; but unfortunately, man does not know the infinite ocean into which this mighty river of love is constantly flowing, and so, foolishly, he often tries to direct it to little dolls of human beings. The tremendous love for the child that is in human nature is not for the little doll of a child; if you bestow it blindly and exclusively on the child, you will suffer in consequence. But through such suffering will come the awakening by which you are sure to find out that the love which is in you, if it is given to any human being, will sooner or later bring pain and sorrow as the result. Our love must, therefore, be given to the Highest One who never dies and never changes, to Him in the ocean of whose love there is neither ebb nor flow. Love must get to its right destination, it must go unto Him who is really the infinite ocean of love.[9]

The philosophy of education of love as Vivekananda idealises and practically wants to be followed in right earnest also explains why love is the most significant components of human ascent and excellence. It also makes it abundantly clear and explicit that as human beings we are never enemies to one another. So there is no question of being afraid of one another. And, as such, the oneness of man leading to the vision of love for the All Love who is each one of us becomes a reality.

Vivekananda makes an apposite deliberation on why we should love one another and upholds the lesson of real love in a serene and blessed manner:

> We have always heard it preached, "Love one another". What for? That doctrine was preached, but the explanation is here. Why should I love every one? Because they and I are one. Why should I love my brother? Because he and I are one. There is this oneness, this solidarity of the whole universe. From the lowest worm that crawls under our feet to the highest beings that ever lived—all have various bodies, but are the one Soul. Through all mouths, you eat; through all hands, you work; through all eyes, you see. You enjoy health in millions of bodies, you are suffering from disease in millions of bodies. When this idea comes, and we realise it, see it, feel it, then will misery cease, and fear with it. How can I die? There is nothing beyond me. Fear ceases, and then alone comes perfect happiness and perfect love. That universal sympathy, universal love, universal bliss, that never changes, raises man above everything. It has no reactions and no misery can touch it; but this little eating and drinking of the world always brings a reaction. The whole cause of this is dualism, the idea that I am separate from the universe, separate from God. But as soon as we have realised that "I am He, I am the Self of the universe, I am eternally blessed, eternally free"—then will come real love, fear will vanish, and all misery cease.[10]

The education of love as the education of freedom makes definite point of departure in Vivekananda's philosophy of love. For such education, freedom from delusion is the important component of love. As soon as we come to realise that the road to freedom is controlled, screened, crystallised and caressed by love and love in earnestness and devotion, the whole world of delusion that the education of freedom is within and it can never be brought from outside. In the same way, love is within and no external force is required to liberate love. Thus freedom in terms of love makes a fusion of an inherent force to be a reality in course of unending struggle, work and worship.

In a lecture delivered in New York, 1896, on the free soul, Vivekananda makes an exhaustive and significant observation on the above, which unfolds the meaning and significance of love in terms of freedom within:

> Every one is as much bound in thought, word, deed, and mind, as a piece of stone or this table. That I talk to you now is as rigorous in causation as that you listen to me. There is no freedom until you go beyond Maya. That is the real freedom of the soul. Men, however sharp and intellectual, however clearly they see the force of the logic that nothing here can be free, are all compelled to think they are free; they cannot help it. No work can go on until we begin to say we are free. It means that the freedom we talk about is the glimpse of the blue sky through the clouds and that the real freedom—the blue sky itself—is behind. True freedom cannot exist in the midst of this delusion, this hallucination, this nonsense of the world, this universe of the senses, body, and mind. All these dreams, without beginning or end, uncontrolled and uncontrollable, ill-adjusted, broken, inharmonious, form our idea of this universe.
>
> * * * * * *
>
> So far it is intellectually all right, but then comes the practice. The real work is in the practice. Are any practices necessary to realise this Oneness? Most decidedly. It is not that you become this Brahman. You are already that. It is not that you are going to become God or perfect; you are already perfect; and whenever you think you are not, it is a delusion. This delusion which says that you are Mr. So-and-so or Mrs. So-and-so can be got rid of by another delusion, and that is practice. Fire will eat fire, and you can use one delusion to conquer another delusion. One cloud will

> come and brush away another cloud, and then both will go away. What are these practices then? We must always bear in mind that we are not going to be free, but are free already. Every idea that we are bound is a delusion. Every idea that we are happy or unhappy is a tremendous delusion; and another delusion will come—that we have got to work and worship and struggle to be free—and this will chase out the first delusion, and then both will stop.[11]

The very entity of every human being is a grand synchronisation of love and freedom, and, with this inherent entity is the highest concept of religion—the concept of All Love. Vivekananda advocates this education of love that is inseparably related to freedom leading to transcendence and ascent of man. The embodiment of freedom that represents God or All Love is within every one of us and it is our duty to learn and discover the unknown and challenging world of knowledge so that real freedom becomes a reality in all serenity and sobriety of love.

Vivekananda characteristically exposes the truth of the above in defining religion:

> The embodiment of freedom, the Master of nature, is what we call God. You cannot deny Him. No, because you cannot move or live without the idea of freedom. Would you come here if you did not believe you were free? It is quite possible that the biologist can and will give some explanation of this perpetual effort to be free. Take all that for granted, still the idea of freedom is there. It is a fact, as much so as the other fact that you cannot apparently get over, the fact of being under nature.
>
> Bondage and liberty, light and shadow, good and evil must be there, but the very fact of the bondage shows also this freedom hidden there. If one is a fact, the other is equally a fact. There must be this idea of freedom. While now we cannot see that this idea of bondage, in uncultivated man, is the struggle for

> freedom, yet the idea of freedom is there. The bondage of sin and impurity in the uncultivated savage is to his consciousness very small, for his culture is only a little higher than the animal's. What he struggles against is the bondage of physical nature, the lack of physical gratification, but out of this lower consciousness grows and broadens the higher conception of a mental or moral bondage and a longing for spiritual freedom. Here we see the divine dimly shining through the veil of ignorance. The veil is very dense at first and the light may be almost obscured, but it is there, ever pure and undimmed—the radiant fire of freedom and perfection. Man personifies this as the Ruler of the Universe, the One Free Being. He does not yet know that the universe is all one, that the difference is only in degree, in the concept.
>
> The whole of nature is worship of God. Wherever there is life, there is this search for freedom and that freedom is the same as God. Necessarily this freedom gives us mastery over all nature and is impossible without knowledge. The more we are knowing, the more we are becoming masters of nature. Mastery alone is making us strong and if there be some being entirely free and master of nature, that being must have a perfect knowledge of nature, must be omnipresent and omniscient. Freedom must go hand in hand with these, and that being alone who has acquired these will be beyond nature.
>
> Blessedness, eternal peace, arising from perfect freedom, is the highest concept of religion underlying all these ideas of God in Vedanta—absolutely free Existence, not bound by anything, no change, no nature, nothing that can produce a change in Him. This same freedom is in you and in me and is the only real freedom.[12]

Vivekananda also traces the philosophy of education of love in social interactions of mankind. His introspective vision of love is the fountain of social ascent and excellence. For this, he encourages on making a real bond of love and harmony between truth and society. Unless truth finds an endearing atmosphere of manifestation in the society, the purpose of education for social regeneration of humans becomes a total flop.

As a social revolutionary par excellence, Vivekananda gives a wider avenue of efflorescence in thinking oneself as the Spirit, the indomitable Atman. As soon as this realisation in loving others to be loved takes its natural and spontaneous course in thinking, working and dying for others, education for social advancement becomes living reality. As he significantly asserts:

> What good is it to talk of the strength of your muscles, of the superiority of your Western institutions, if you cannot make Truth square with your society, if you cannot build up a society into which the highest Truth will fit? What is the good of this boastful talk about your grandeur and greatness, if you stand up and say, "This courage is not practical." Is nothing practical but pounds, shillings, and pence? If so, why boast of your society? *That society is the greatest, where the highest truths become practical.* That is my opinion; and if society is not fit for the highest truths, make it so; and the sooner, the better. Stand up, men and women, in this spirit, dare to believe in the Truth, dare to practise the Truth! The world requires a few bold men and women. Practise that boldness which dares know the Truth, which dares show the Truth in life, which does not quake before death, nay, welcomes death, makes a man know that he is the Spirit, that, in the whole universe, nothing can kill him. Then you will be free. Then you will know your real Soul. "This Atman is first to be heard, then thought about and then meditated upon."
>
> There is a great tendency in modern times to talk too much of work and decry thought. Doing is very good, but that comes from thinking. Little manifestations of energy through the muscles are called

> work. But where there is no thought, there will be no work. Fill the brain, therefore, with high thoughts, highest ideals, place them day and night before you, and out of that will come great work. Talk not about impurity, but say that we are pure. We have hypnotised ourselves into this thought that we are little, that we are born, and that we are going to die, and into a constant state of fear.[13]

For a society to be best educated in the lesson of love, introspection is the right road to ascent and excellence. Vivekananda goes a step further in identifying the role of an individual in terms of a loving society. He delves deep into the real nature of the universe that tempts mankind to hasten freedom which is impossible because the whole environ is very insignificant in comparison with the power of the soul. Infinite freedom is actually a ceaseless struggle to make every one of us worthy of reaching the centre of altruism, the harbour or homeland of love. Unless that education is exercised in all sincerity and devotion, it would be a futile exercise in the odyssey of our making real kinship with animals, plants and life anywhere and everywhere disregarding friendship or enmity as the case may be.

Vivekananda's own introspective vision on the role of education of love in close pursuit of infinite freedom incomparably opens a new horizon of social excellence where every individual learns a new definition of love:

> If a man who is dreaming of this world now dreams of wicked thoughts and wicked deeds, after a certain time the thought of that very dream will produce the next dream. He will dream that he is in a horrible place, being tortured. The man who is dreaming good thoughts and good deeds, after that period of dream is over, will dream he is in a better place; and so on from dream to dream. But the time will come when the whole of this dream will vanish. To everyone of us there must come a time when the whole universe will be found to have been a mere dream, when we

> shall find that the soul is infinitely better than its surroundings. In this struggle through what we call our environments, there will come a time when we shall find that these environments were almost zero in comparison with the power of the soul. It is only a question of time, and time is nothing in the Infinite. It is a drop in the ocean. We can afford to wait and be calm.
>
> Consciously or unconsciously, therefore, the whole universe is going towards that goal. The moon is struggling to get out of the sphere of attraction of other bodies, and will come out of it, in the long run. But those who consciously strive to get free hasten the time. One benefit from this theory we practically see is that the idea of a real universal love is only possible from this point of view. All are fellow passengers, our fellow travellers—all life, plants, animals; not only my brother man, but my brother brute, my brother plant; not only my brother the good, but my brother the evil, my brother the spiritual and my brother the wicked. They are all going to the same goal. All are in the same stream, each is hurrying towards that infinite freedom. We cannot stay the course, none can stay it, none can go back, however he may try; he will be driven forward, and in the end he will attain to freedom. Creation means the struggle to get back to freedom, the centre of our being, whence we have been thrown off, as it were. The very fact that we are here, shows that we are going towards the centre, and the manifestation of this attraction towards the centre is what we call love.[14]

As regards the beckoning of humanism in the education of love, Vivekananda makes a new experiment on human endeavour. He unfolds a new vision of India where the signal of destruction will be radically replaced by the undying force of love. In his clarion call for revival and rejuvenation of the unfailing spirit of love, he poignantly remarks:

> India will be raised, not with the power of the flesh,

but with the power of the spirit; not with the flag of destruction, but with the flag of peace and love, the garb of the Sannyasin; not by the power of wealth, but by the power of the begging bowl. Say not that you are weak. The spirit is omnipotent. Look at that handful of young men called into existence by the divine touch of Ramakrishna's feet. They have preached the message from Assam to Sindh, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. They have crossed the Himalayas at a height of twenty thousand feet over snow and ice on foot, and penetrated into the mysteries of Tibet. They have begged their bread, covered themselves with rags; they have been persecuted, followed by the police, kept in prison, and at last set free when the Government was convinced of their innocence.

* * * * * * * * *

Be great. No great work can be done without sacrifice. The Purusha Himself sacrificed Himself to create this world. Lay down your comforts, your pleasures, your names, fame or position, nay even your lives, and make a bridge of human chains over which millions will cross this ocean of life. Bring all the forces of good together. Do not care under what banner you march. Do not cat be your colour—green, blue, or red—but mix up all the colours and produce that intense glow of white, the colour of love. Ours is to work. The results will take care of themselves. If any social institution stands in your way of becoming God, it will give way before the power of Spirit. I do not see into the future; nor do I care to see. But one vision I see clear as life before me; that the ancient Mother has awakened once more, sitting on Her rejuvenated, more glorious than ever. Proclaim Her to all the world with the voice of peace and benediction.[15]

From the spiritual point of view, Vivekananda idealises the education of love in the most practical and effective manner.

He makes us aware of the fact that eternal freedom is always within us and we nourish it with the component of love, the vision of man the Divine becomes transparent and effulgent, and the music of the Soul as attuned to the whole of human ambience becomes resonant with the fountain of spirituality.

How does Vivekananda present this spiritual vision of freedom as inherent in the education of love? How would we be prepared for the cultivation of education of love from the spiritual point of view? Here are Vivekananda's invaluable observations substantiated by the spiritual philosophy of the Vedanta:

> The whole vision is changed, and instead of an eternal prison this world has become a playground; instead of a land of competition it is a land of bliss, where there is perpetual spring, flowers bloom and butterflies flit about. This very world becomes heaven, which formerly was hell. To the eyes of the bound it is a tremendous place of torment, but to the eyes of the free it is quite otherwise. This one life is the universal life, heavens and all those places are here. All the gods are here, the prototypes of man. The gods did not create man after their type, but man created gods. And here are the prototypes, here is Indra, here is Varuna, and all the gods of the universe. We have been projecting our little doubles, and we are the originals of these gods, we are the real, the only gods to be worshipped. This is the view of the Vedanta, and this its practicality. When we have become free, we need not go mad and throw up society and rush off to die in the forest or the cave; we shall remain where we were, only we shall understand the whole thing. The same phenomena will remain, but with a new meaning. We do not know the world yet; it is only through freedom that we see what it is, and understand its nature. We shall see then that this so-called law, or fate, or destiny occupied only an infinitesimal part of our nature. It was only one side, but on the other side there was freedom all the time. We did not know this,

> and that is why we have been trying to save ourselves from evil by hiding our faces in the ground, like the hunted hare. Through delusion we have been trying to forget our nature, and yet we could not; it was always calling upon us, and all our search after God or gods, or external freedom, was a search after our real nature. We mistook the voice. We thought it was from the fire, or from a god or the sun, or moon, or stars, but at last we have found that it was from within ourselves. Within ourselves is this eternal voice speaking of eternal freedom; its music is eternally going on. Pat of this music of the Soul has become the earth, the law, this universe, but it was always ours and always will be.[16]

At the same time, Vivekananda discards the world of effeminate negativism more often than not nurtured and disseminated in and through mysticism, and welcomes a positive and heartening change of approach to mystic serenity, vigour and grandeur. His sacred cathedral of mystic ascent is crystallised in the education that proclaims and heralds the march of humans in the victory of love. In fact, love is the touchstone of mystic advancement of man.

For a march beyond, Vivekananda, therefore, discards mysticism as a confusing spent force only from the point of view of abstraction. As a practical mystic visionary, he advises us to do away with all forms of weakening mystic endeavour and encourages us to learn and practise the lesson of love for mankind. As he draws our attention to the energising and stimulant lesson of positive mysticism of love from the Upanishads:

> What we want is strength, so believe in yourselves. We have become weak, and that is why occultism and mysticism have come to us—these creepy things; there may be great truths in them, but they have nearly destroyed us. Make your nerves strong. What we want is muscles of iron and nerves of steel. We have wept long enough. No more weeping, but stand on your

> feet and be men. It is a man-making religion that we want. It is man-making theories that we want. It is man-making education all around that we want. And here is the test of truth—anything that makes you weak physically, intellectually, and spiritually, reject as poison; there is no life in it, it cannot be true. Truth is strengthening. Truth is purity, truth is all-knowledge; truth must be strengthening, must be enlightening, must be invigorating. These mysticisms, in spite of some grains of truth in them, are generally weakening. Believe me, I have a lifelong experience of it, and the one conclusion that I draw is that it is weakening. I have travelled all over India, searched almost every cave here, and lived in the Himalayas. I know people who lived there all their lives. I love my nation, I cannot see you degraded, weakened any more than you are now. Therefore I am bound for your sake and for truth's sake to cry, "Hold!" and to raise my voice against this degradation of my race. Give up these weakening mysticisms and be strong. Go back to your Upanishads—the shining, the strengthening, the bright philosophy—and part from all these mysterious things, all these weakening things. Take up this philosophy; the greatest truths are the simplest things in the world, simple as your own existence. The truths of the Upanishads are before you. Take them up, live up to them, and the salvation of India will be at hand.[17]

Do we join hands together with the promise of perfection of the lesson of love as above?

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2

Education of Love and Freedom: Vivekananda's Forethoughts

Education is always an adventure in fullness of development of personality. This fullness cannot be attained unless the learner and the teacher enjoy the synchronised and reciprocal ambience of love and freedom. As is freedom so is love manifested in all spontaneity. In education, this becomes all the more effective and relevant under a constant vigil by means of exercising discipline and sincerity, devotion and dedication.

Unlike any other educational thinker and organiser, Swami Vivekananda considers love and freedom in education as two pioneering and in-depth forces of human ascent and excellence. He gives importance to both these components of human enlightenment as these two serve like milestones of human regeneration. Being disgusted with the-then lackadaisical and slovenly system of education that cared more for material progress than purity of mind and consolidation of love and freedom, he has drawn our attention to whatever stands for strengthening of personality in a sound atmosphere of man making and character building. Naturally, there is hardly any room for exercise of sentimentalism that creates ivory towers of dreams and illusions, hallucinations and fantasies. He discards scepticism and emboldens firmness of belief. This is why he allows love and freedom to facts even in religion apart from the elimination of facts in physical science, for example, where probabilities pay a heavy price in the world of sense perception and sense enrichment.

While there is a diametrically opposite relationship between the Eastern and the Western mind-sets on the above, Vivekananda describes his own experience in exploring the intensity of love and freedom that brings forth reality in belief firm like a rock:

> Every moment I think of anything else is so much loss to me—even the marvels of earthly sciences; everything is vain if it takes me away from that thought. Life is but momentary, whether you have the knowledge of an angel or the ignorance of an animal. Life is but momentary, whether you have the poverty of the poorest man in rage or the wealth of the richest living person. Life is but momentary, whether you are a downtrodden man living in one of the big streets of the big cities of the West or a crowned Emperor ruling over millions. Life is but momentary, whether you have the best of health or the worst. Life is but momentary, whether you have the most poetical temperament or the most cruel. There is but one solution of life, says the Hindu, and that solution is what they call God and religion. If these true, life becomes explained, life becomes bearable, becomes enjoyable. Otherwise, life is but a useful burden. That is our idea, but no amount of reasoning can demonstrate it; it can only make it probable, and there it rests. The highest demonstration of reasoning that we have in any branch of knowledge can only make a fact probable, and nothing further. The most demonstrable facts of physical science are only probabilities, not facts yet. Facts are only in the senses. Facts have to be perceived, and we have to perceive religion to demonstrate it to ourselves. We have to sense God to be conceived that there is a God. We must sense the facts of religion to know that they are facts. Nothing else, and no amount of reasoning, but our own perception can make these things real to us, can make my belief firm as a rock.[1]

The manifestation of love well caressed and disciplined in freedom to be in order to be justified to individuality is the forte of Vivekananda's philosophy of education of love. He attunes freedom in the spirit of love in its entirety and perfection. And so, love in fine tune with freedom becomes God.

At the same time, with the all-pervading spirit of love under the ambience of freedom of mind and spirit, Vivekananda introduces an altogether new education of how to make a perfect symphony of love and freedom with clarity of vision and a positive approach to ascent and qualitative advancement. As he significantly elucidates:

> Lovers see this world as full of love, and haters as full of hatred; fighters see nothing but strife, and the peaceful nothing but peace. The perfect man sees nothing but God. So we always worship our highest ideal, and when we have reached the point, when we love the ideal as the ideal, all arguments and doubts vanish for ever. Who cares whether God can be demonstrated or not? The ideal can never go because it is a part of my own nature, I shall only question the ideal when I question my own existence, and as I cannot question the one, I cannot question the other. Who cares whether God can be almighty and all-merciful at the same time or not? Who cares whether He is the rewarder of mankind, whether He looks at us with the eyes of a tyrant or with the eyes of a beneficent monarch?
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> The lover has passed through all these things, beyond rewards and punishments, beyond fears and doubts, beyond scientific or any other demonstration. Sufficient unto him is the ideal of love, and is it not self-evident that this universe is but a manifestation of this love? What is that makes atoms unite with atoms, molecules with molecules, and causes planets to fly towards each other? What is it that attracts man to man, man to woman, woman to man, and animals to animals, drawing the whole universe, as it were, towards one centre? It is what is called love. Its manifestation is from the lowest atom to the highest

> being; omnipotent, all-pervading is this love. What manifests itself as attraction in the sentient and the insentient, in the particular and in the universal, is the love of God. It is the one motive power that is in the universe. Under the impetus of that love, Christ gives his love for humanity, Buddha even for an animal, the mother for the child, the husband for the wife. It is under the impetus of the same love that men are ready to give up their lives for their country, and strange to say, under the impetus of the same love, the thief steals, the murderer murders. Even in these cases, the spirit is the same, but the manifestation is different. This is the one motive power in the universe. The thief has love for gold; the love is here but it is misdirected. So, in all crimes, as well as in virtuous actions, behind stands that eternal love.[2]

What type of men and women blessed in the communion of love and freedom does Vivekananda expect? What efflorescence of practicality does he want to be derived from the education that an individual should receive from the inputs of love and freedom? As an iconoclast, he upholds a revolutionary picture of education whose primary end-in-view is to prove his scientific vision in the marvellous fusion of love and freedom that ensures and manifests advancement of spirituality.

Admittedly, Vivekananda, for the first time in the whole history of the role of love and freedom as vital and living components of education, has brought forth a dynamic and tremendous force of human endeavour by means of which an individual finds a new lease of life in joining 'the Ocean of Life and Bliss'. In his own vibrant words:

> Let us all work on our own plans. Would to God all of us were equally practical on both sides. I have seen some scientists who were equally practical, both as scientists and as spiritual men, and it is my great hope that in course of time the whole of humanity will be efficient in the same manner. When a kettle of water is

> coming to the boil, if you watch the phenomenon, you find first one bubble rising, and then another and so on, until at last they all join, and a tremendous commotion takes place. This world is very similar. Each individual is like a bubble, and the nations, resemble many bubbles. Gradually these nations are joining, and I am sure the day will come when separation will vanish and that Oneness to which we are all going will become manifest. A time must come when every man will be as intensely practical in the scientific world as in the spiritual, and then that Oneness, the harmony of Oneness, will pervade the whole world. The whole of mankind will become Jivanmuktas—free whilst living. We are all struggling towards that one end through our jealousies and hatreds, through our love and co-operation. A tremendous stream is flowing towards the ocean carrying us all with it; and though like straws and scraps of paper we may at times float aimlessly about, in the long run we are sure to join the Ocean of Life and Bliss.[3]

The love for freedom that Vivekananda wants to be disseminated in doing away with ignorance and creating a serene atmosphere of transcending the lower self is the education of all education. In fact, he draws our attention to absence of freedom in a materialistic, consumer-happy confused world where the finer senses and the nobler visions of love and freedom have been terribly jeopardised. As warnings against this and particularly the haunting nightmares of unfulfilled aspirations, thanks to absence of discipline in our exercise of freedom and love, he continually encourages to learn the lesson of self-freedom.

The emancipation of man from the bondage of illusion that he is dissociated from God or All Love is the most vulnerable component of how to drive away the darkness of ignorance. This is why the education of freedom that loves to know the Self by going beyond the matter-of-fact chain of cause and effect has been given due priority in his educational philosophy. As he makes a definite breakthrough in this regard:

Man makes the mistakes of separating himself from God and identifying himself with the body. This mistake arises through Maya, which is not exactly delusion but might be said to be seeing the real as something else and not as it is. This identifying of ourselves with the body leads us to inequality, which inevitably leads to struggle and jealousy, and so long as we see inequality, we can never know happiness. "Ignorance and inequality are the two sources of all misery", says Jnana.

When man has been sufficiently buffeted by the world, he wakes to a desire for freedom; and searching for means of escape from the dreary round of earthly existence, he seeks knowledge, learns what he really is, and is free. After that he looks at the world as a huge machine, but takes good care to keep his fingers out of the wheels. Duty ceases for him who is free; what power can constrain the free being? He does good, because it is his nature, not because any fancied duty commands it. This does not apply to those who are still in the bondage of the senses. Only for him, who has transcended the lower self, is this freedom. He stands on his own soul, obeys no law; he is free and perfect. He has undone the old superstitions and got out of the wheel. Nature is but the mirror of our own selves. There is a limit to the working power of human beings, but no limit to desire; so we strive to get hold of the working powers of others and enjoy the fruits of their labours, escaping work ourselves. Inventing machinery to work for us can never increase well-being, for in gratifying desire, we only find it, and then we want more and more without end. Dying, still filled with ungratified desires, we have to be born again and again in the vain search for satisfaction. "Eight Millions of bodies have we had, before we reached the human", say the Hindus. Jnana says, "Kill desire and so get rid of it". That is the only way. Cast out all causation and realise the Atman. Only freedom

> can produce true morality. If there were only an endless chain of cause and effect, Nirvana could not be. It is extinction of the seeming self, bound by this chain. That is what constitutes freedom, to get beyond causality.[4]

Admittedly, when Vivekananda suggests to us to become Gods and go beyond the humdrum affairs of worldly life, he has a definite end-in-view of how to endear the spirit of freedom within every one of us. This education opens a new chapter of advancement of man and serves three-fold purpose: first, we strive to be relieved from the trouble of the ego; second, the love for serving others by the sweeping force of extinction of personality becomes a living reality; and third, with love and freedom in the true symphony of excellence and ascent, the radiant vision of a totally selfless great "I" will be really exisent in every one of us.

Vivekananda's own words on the above are very significant and vibrant:

> Let us be Gods, let us make our hearts like an ocean, to go beyond all the trifles of the world and see it only as a picture. We can then enjoy it without being in any way affected by it. We look for good in the world, what can we find there? The best it has to offer is only as if children playing in a mud puddle found a few glass beads. They lose them again and have to begin the search anew. Infinite strength is religion and God. We are only souls if we are free, there is immortality if we are free, there is God only if He is free.
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> Until we give up the world manufactured by the ego, never can we enter the Kingdom of Heaven. None ever did, none ever will. To give up the world is to utterly forget the ego, to know it not at all, living in the body but not being ruled by it. This rascal ego must be obliterated. Power to help mankind is with the silent ones who only live and love and withdraw their own personality entirely. They never say "me" or "mine", they are only blessed in being the instruments to help others. They are wholly identified with

> God, asking nothing and not consciously doing anything. They are the true Jivanmuktas—the absolutely selfless, their little personality thoroughly blown away, ambition non-existent. They are all principle, with no personality. The more we sink the "little self", the more God comes. Let us get rid of the little "I" and let only the great "I" live in us. Our best work and our greatest influence is when we are without a thought of self.[5]

The education and love and freedom as Vivekananda for the first time introduces as a serene means of unison with God breaks an altogether new ground of human reality as an unquestionably divine existence. The education of love for the All Love always awaits exercise of freedom to be in perfect fusion with and dedication to God. In this exercise three things take place simultaneously: total submission to the All Love as the awakener of freedom of mind and heart, accepting the All Love as the nearest and dearest of all, and emancipation of the self for madness of love. As Vivekananda upholds this divine perspective of love and freedom adroitly:

> All the energies of the human body and the mind, however they may express themselves, have the Lord as their one goal, as their Ekayana. All loves and all passions of the human heart must go to God. He is the Beloved. Whom else can this heart love? He is the most beautiful, the most sublime. He is beauty itself, sublimity itself. Who in this universe is more beautiful than He? Who in this universe is more fit than He? So let Him be the husband, let Him be the Beloved.
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> Often it so happens that divine lovers who sing of this divine love accept the language of human love in all its aspects as adequate to describe it. Fools do not understand this; they never will. They look at only with the physical eye. They do not understand the mad throes of this spiritual love. How can they? "For one kiss of Thy lips, O Beloved! One who has been kissed by Thee, has his thirst for Thee increasing for

> ever, all his sorrows vanish, and he forgets all things except Thee alone." Aspire after that kiss of the Beloved, that touch of His lips which makes the Bhakta mad, which makes of man a god. To him, who has been blessed with such a kiss, the whole of nature changes, worlds vanish, suns and moons die out, and the universe itself melts away into that one infinite ocean of love. That is the perfection of the madness of love.[6]

That man is not compelled and limited by law is where the genesis of freedom lies. Out of this genesis, the vision of love becomes very transparent. It clarifies the fact that freedom beckons the infinite which again proves love beyond experience and reasoning, and, as such, man and laws are not constitutionally interrelated. Only man has the freedom to transcend beyond laws, reasoning and scientific experiences, where freedom welcomes love.

Vivekananda, therefore, inspires us to seek freedom in the infinite where the span of search is crystallised by love. We understand and feel within that there is basically no distinction between freedom and love. At the same time, we also understand and feel that Love is God and vice versa. With the specific ends-in-view of education of freedom and love, Vivekananda reminds us of the teachings of the Vedanta on law, freedom, love and God as follows:

> All our ideas of law are within the little bit. It is nonsense to say that law is infinite, that throughout all time stones will fall. If all reason be based upon experience, who was there to see if stones fell five millions of years ago? So law is not constitutional in man. It is a scientific assertion as to man that where we begin, there we end. As a matter of fact we get gradually outside of law, until we get out altogether, but with the additional experience of a whole life. In God and freedom we began, and freedom and God will be the end. These laws are in the middle state through which we have to pass. Our Vedanta is the

> assertion of freedom always. The very idea of law will frighten the Vedantist; and eternal law is a very dreadful thing for him, because there would be no escape. If there is to be an eternal law binding him all the time, where is the difference between him and a blade of grass? We do not believe in that abstract idea of law.
>
> We say that it is freedom that we are to seek, and that freedom is God. It is the same happiness as in everything else; but when man seeks it in something which is finite, he gets only a spark of it. The thief when he steals gets the same happiness as the man who finds it in God; but the thief gets only a little spark with a mass of misery. The real happiness is God. Love is God, freedom is God; and everything that is bondage is not God.
>
> Man has freedom already, but he will have to discover it. He has it, but every moment forgets it. That discovering, consciously or unconsciously, is the whole life of every one. But the difference between the sage and the ignorant man is that one does it consciously and the other unconsciously.[7]

For the purpose of education that caters to knowledge and bliss, freedom is the most essential component. Vivekananda reminds us that it alone has the force of eliminating selfishness and narrowness of thought and action for human advancement. It alone shows the way to understanding and appreciating that the universe is embodied in every person, every entity. To identify oneself as the universe is to be enlightened with Oneness, and to be enlightened with Oneness is to be hallowed with love as the infinite outcome of freedom.

The birth of the new man, new religion, and new identity with the blessings of knowledge that represents freedom and love is one of the most prominent events in the advancement of human ascent and excellence. Vivekananda welcomes us to that lotus land of purity and catholicity of religion that is enriched in the education of freedom and love. As he categorically observes:

> There are two ends or aims of human life, real knowing(Vijnana) and bliss. Without freedom, these two are impossible. They are the touchstone of all life. We should feel the Eternal Unity so much, that we should weep for all sinners, knowing that it is *we* who are sinning. The eternal law is self-sacrifice, not self-assertion. What self to assert when all is one? There are no "rights", all is love. The great truths that Jesus taught have never been lived. Let us try his method and see if the world will not be saved. The contrary method has nearly destroyed it. Selflessness only, not selfishness, can solve the question. The idea of "right" is a limitation; there is really no "mine" and "thine", for I am thou and thou art I. We have "responsibility", not "rights". We should say, "I am the universe", not "I am John" or "I am Mary". These limitations are all delusions and are what holds us in bondage, for as soon as I think, "I am John", I want exclusive possession of certain things and begin to say "me and mine", and continually make new distinctions in so doing. So our bondage goes on increasing with every fresh distinction, and we get further and further away from the Central Unity, the undivided Infinite. There is only one Individual, and each of us is That. Oneness alone is love and fearlessness; separation leads us to hatred and fear. Oneness fulfils the law. Here, on earth, we strive to enclose little spaces and exclude outsiders, but we cannot do that in the sky, though that is what sectarian religion tries to do when it says, "Only *this* way leads to salvation, all others are wrong". Our aim should be to wipe out these little enclosures to widen the boundaries until they are lost sight of, and to realise that all religions lead to God. This little puny self must be sacrificed. This is the truth symbolised by baptism into a new life, the death of the old man, the birth of

> the new—the perishing of the false self, the realisation of the Atman, he one Self of the universe.[8]

The force of love in association with the catholicity of freedom which Vivekananda has always wanted in the education of ascent and excellence has its great end-in-view of devotion well harmonized in dedication. So when he speaks of salvation in life, love and freedom then take the major role of moulding the mind in the education that cares for discipline in every moment of life. Who would teach one that lesson of discipline of freedom and love well synchronized and serenely cultivated? Obviously, one must find out the real teacher. Who is that real teacher? What are the fundamental strategies of that real teacher? Vivekananda has a very specific and transparent elucidation of love and freedom in terms of spirituality:

> You may get a teacher in the body; but the real teacher is not in the body; he is not the physical man—he is not as he appears to your eyes. It may be the teacher will come to you as a human being, and you will receive the power from him. Sometimes he will come in a dream and transmit things to the world. The power of the teacher may come to us in many ways. But for us ordinary mortals the teacher must come, and our preparation must go on till he comes.
>
> We attend lectures and read books, argue and reason about God and soul, religion and salvation. These are not spirituality, because spirituality does not exist in books or in theories or in philosophies. It is not in learning or reasoning, but in actual inner growth. Even parrots can learn things by heart and repeat them. If you become learned, what of it? Asses can carry whole libraries. So when real light will come, there will be no more of this learning from books—no book-learning. The man who cannot write even his own name can be perfectly religious, and the man with all the libraries of the world in his head may fail to be. Learning is not the condition of spiritual growth;

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> scholarship is not a condition. The touch of the Guru, the transmittal of spiritual energy, will quicken your heart. Then will begin the growth. That is the real baptism by fire. No more stopping. You go on and go on.[9]

The force of love is the force of freedom, and the force of freedom teaches the lesson of renunciation. With such a lesson the education of the inherent divinity is well translated in the service of man, the living God. With this great vision of love and freedom Vivekananda exposes the real goal of life.

Tracing the history of man right from intelligence which, according to Vivekananda, is always infinite and cosmic, the lesson of love leading to freedom upholds the great truth that the soul of man is beyond body and mind, and, therefore, beyond life and death also. To seek an effect as the outcome of cause and vice versa is the law of the world as we live. The education of love and freedom extends this horizon as the cosmic vision refines our law of causation and heightens the soul of man beyond life and death. As Vivekananda characteristically observes:

> What is the end of this universe? Intelligence, is it not? The last to come in the order of creation, according to the evolutionists, was intelligence. That being so, it must be the cause, the beginning of creation also. At the beginning that intelligence remains involved, and in the end it gets evolved. The sum total of the intelligence displayed in the universe must therefore be the involved universal intelligence unfolding itself, and this universal intelligence is what we call God, from whom we come and to whom we return, as the scriptures say. Call it by any other name, you cannot deny that in the beginning there is that infinite cosmic intelligence.
>
> What makes a compound? A compound is that in which the causes have combined and become the effect. So these compound things can be only within the circle of the law of causation; so far as the rules of cause and

> effect go, so far can we have the compounds and the conditions. Beyond that it is impossible to talk of combinations, because no law holds good therein. Law holds good only in that universe which we see, feel, hear, imagine, dream, and beyond that we cannot place any idea of law. That is our universe which we sense or imagine, and we sense what is within our direct perception, and we imagine what is in our mind. What is beyond the body is beyond the senses, and what is beyond the mind is beyond the imagination, and therefore is beyond our universe, and therefore beyond the law of causation. The Self of man being beyond the law of causation is not a compound, is not the effect of any cause, and therefore is ever free and is the ruler of everything that is within law. Not being a compound, it will never die, because death means going back to the component parts, destruction means going back to the cause. Because it cannot die, it cannot live; for both life and death are modes of manifestation of the same thing. So the Soul is beyond life and death. You were never born, and you will never die. Birth and death belong to the body only.[10]

Where, then, lies the importance of freedom in the education of love? Is freedom more important than love? What should be its greatest contribution as a fundamental component of education in terms of love? Vivekananda has presented us with a superb conclusion which not only unfolds the end-in-view of freedom in the education of love, but also transpires the truth of supreme devotion. In his own words:

> Freedom, Salvation, Nirvana—all are thrown away; who cares to become free while in the enjoyment of divine love? "Lord, I do not want wealth, nor friends, nor beauty, nor learning, nor even freedom; let me be born again and again, and be Thou ever my Love. Be Thou ever and ever my Love." "Who cares to become sugar?" says the Bhakta, "I want to taste sugar." Who will then desire to become free and one with God? "I may know that I am He; yet will I take myself away

> from Him and become different, so that I may enjoy the Beloved." That is what the Bhakta says. Love for love's sake is his highest enjoyment. Who will not be bound hand and foot a thousand times over to enjoy the Beloved? No Bhakta cares anything except love, except to love and to be loved. His unworldly love is like the tide rushing up the river; this lover goes up the river against the current. The world calls him mad. I know one whom the world used to call mad, and this was the answer: "My friends, the whole world is a lunatic asylum. Some are mad after worldly love, some after name, some after fame, some after money, some after salvation and going to heaven. In this big lunatic asylum I am also mad, I am mad after God. If you are mad after money, I am mad after God. You are mad; so am I. I think my madness is after all the best." The true Bhakta's love is this burning madness before which everything else vanishes for him. The whole universe is to him full of love and love alone; that is how it seems to the lover. So when a man has this love in him, he becomes eternally blessed, eternally happy. This blessed madness of divine love alone can cure for ever the disease of the world that is in us.[11]

Are we prepared to devote ourselves to the education of love in the best efflorescence of freedom as above?

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3

Education of Love and Society: Vivekananda's Introspection

Education translates and transmits the spirit of conjoint and vibrant living. It is the key to communicativeness amongst all living in and around us and sharing a synchronised life of togetherness in the best manifestation of altruism. The spirit of love that plays a major role in the practice of altruism brings forth transparency and truth in and through which a society is enlightened. For such enlightenment, education makes a coherent and comprehensive blend love and society as a result of which the march of humans for excellence and ascent becomes a living and dynamic reality.

What are the essential components that should come under the purview of education for making a perfect unison between love and society? How can education be imparted so that it love as an energising and endearing force can play a very forceful and effectively for transformation and transcendence of a gloomy and sordid social scenario? As an incomparable and unparalleled social visionary, Swami Vivekananda has waged a war against social evils and superstitions, inaccuracies and inconsistencies in social habits and customs, ignorance and apathy etc., and has introduced education of love that cares and refines all social oddities and abstractions. His introspective dealings with education of love as a vibrant force for social advancement is an altogether new and tremendously inspiring lesson to go ahead with the promise and perfection of man the Divine Being.

With education of love as the primary target of social reform, Vivekananda inspires us to educate all in order to eradicate tyranny in the society. As he categorically spells out:

> We do stand in need of social reform. At times great men would evolve new ideas of progress, and kings would give them the sanction of law. Thus social improvements had been in the past made in India, and in modern times to effect such progressive reforms, we will have first to build up such an authoritative power. Kings having gone, the power is the people's. We have, therefore, to wait till the people are educated, till they understand their needs and are ready and able to solve their problems. The tyranny of the minority is the worst tyranny in the world. Therefore, instead of frittering away our energies on ideal reforms, which will never become practical, we had better go to the root of the evil and make a legislative body, that is to say, educate our people, so that they may be able to solve their own problems. Until that is done, all these ideal reforms will remain ideals only. The new order of things is the salvation of the people by the people, and it takes time to make it workable, especially in India, which has always in the past been governed by kings.[1]

Casteism as one of the greatest evils of the society is to be defeated by the education of love. Vivekananda considers it not merely an evil of the worst type but also one of the greatest challenges of education. His bold suggestion is to raise their standard of life through education of intellect and religion, where social stigmas are done away with a warm welcome of love. His solution for eradicating social ostracism is as follows:

> The solution is not by bringing down the higher, but by raising the lower up to the level of the higher. And that is the line of work that is found in all our books, in spite of what you may hear from some people whose knowledge of their own scriptures and whose capacity to understand the mighty plan of the ancients are only zero. They do not understand, but those do that have

> brains, that have the intellect to grasp the whole scope of the work. They stand aside and follow the wonderful procession of national life through the ages. They can trace it step by step through all the books, ancient and modern. What is the plan? The ideal at one hand is the Brahmin and the ideal at the other hand is the Chandala, and the whole work is to raise the Chandala up to the Brahmin. Slowly and slowly you find more and more privileges granted to them. There are books where you read such fierce words as these: "If the Shudra hears the Vedas, fill his ears with molten lead, and if he remembers a line, cut his tongue out. If he says to the Brahmin, 'You Brahmin', cut his tongue out." This is diabolical old barbarism no doubt; that goes without saying; but do not blame the law-givers, who simply record the customs of some section of the community. Such devils sometimes arose among the ancients. There have been devils everywhere more or less in all ages. Accordingly, you will find that later on, this tone is modified a little, as for instance, "Do not disturb the Shudras, but do not teach them higher things". Then gradually we find in other Smritis, especially in those that have full power now, that if the Shudras imitate the manners and customs to the Brahmins they do well, they ought to be encouraged. Thus it is going on. I have no time to place before you all these workings, nor how they can be traced in detail; but coming to plain facts, we find that all the castes are to rise slowly and slowly.[2]

The education of the spirit of being social infusion with love is the most desirable end-in-view of the philosophy of education of Swami Vivekananda. Neither utility nor happiness, the matter of fact aims and objectives of education as one very often comes across notwithstanding, should be the goal of education. The education where society is ignored and love for the society is banished, what is the outcome? When sincerity is replaced by aggression and hatred, selfishness takes the upper hand and looms large in the society.

Meanwhile, the essence of the education for social welfare is crushed under narrowness of mind and ignorance of truth. Impurity and immorality writ large in the society are the fruits of material knowledge that does not allow enrichment of the spirit that upholds education for social and humane development.

As an ardent social visionary par excellence, Vivekananda elucidates the true concept of knowledge that promotes social excellence in terms of love for humane and divine advancement as follows:

> In these days, we have to measure everything by utility—by right has a person to ask that truth should be judged by the standard of utility or money? Suppose there is no utility, will it be less true? Utility is not the test of truth. Nevertheless, how many pounds, shillings, and pence it represents. What there is the highest utility in this. Happiness, we see, is that everyone is seeking for, but the majority seek it in things which are evanescent and not real. No happiness was ever found in the senses. There never was a person who found happiness in the senses or in enjoyment of the senses. Happiness is only found in the Spirit. The next point is that ignorance is the great mother of all misery, and the fundamental ignorance is to think that the Infinite weeps and cries, that He is finite. This is the basis of all ignorance that we, the immortal, the ever pure, the perfect Spirit, think that we are little minds, that we are little bodies; it is the mother of all selfishness. As soon as I think that I am a little body, I want to preserve it, to protect it, to keep it nice, at the expense of other bodies; then you and I become separate. As soon as this idea of separation comes, it opens the door to all mischief and leads to all misery. This is the utility that if a very small fractional part of human beings living today can put aside the idea of selfishness, narrowness, and littleness, this earth will become a paradise tomorrow; but with machines and improvements of material knowledge only, it will never be.

> These only increase misery, as oil poured on fire increases the flame all the more. Without the knowledge of the Spirit, all material knowledge is only adding fuel to fire, only giving into the hands of selfish man one more instrument to take what belongs to others, to live upon the life of others, instead of giving up his life for them.[3]

In delving deep into the synchronised relationship between the education of love and society, Vivekananda unfolds the invaluable truth that no society excels and thrives unless there is a strong bond of love. The unity of all existence reveals the fact that love and society are inseparable. From this very truth the concept of education becomes very explicit. The role of education takes a new meaning, a new vision and a new philosophy of social harmony. In the context of social emancipation education naturally becomes dynamic, purposeful and living, where all people really feel for a conjoint and communicated ambience of advancement of spirituality.

How does Vivekananda prepare himself for such an education of love in close association with and involvement in social unity? How does he advise us to be worthy of service to the society in terms of love? Again, how does he uphold the worth of every one and everything under the catholic vision of all-embracing love? The answers to all these questions may be most appropriately given in his own words:

> We must become thinkers. Every birth is painful. We must get out of materialism. My mother would not let us get out of Her clutches; nevertheless we must try. This struggle is all the worship there is; all the rest is mere shadow. You are the Personal God. Just now I am worshipping you. This is the greatest prayer. Worship the whole world in that sense—by serving it. This standing on a high platform, I know, does not appear like worship. But if it is service, it is worship.
>
> The infinite truth is never to be acquired. It is here all the time, undying and unborn. He, the Lord of the

> universe, is in every one. There is but one temple—the body. It is the only temple that ever existed. In this body He resides, the Lord of the souls and the King of kings. We do not see that, so we make stone images of Him and build temples over them. Vedanta has been in India always, but India is full of these temples—and not only temples, but also caves containing carved images. "The fool, dwelling on the bank of the Ganga, digs a well for water!" Such are we! Living in the midst of God—we must go and make images. We project Him in the form of the image, while all the time He exists in the temple of our body. We are lunatics, and this is the great delusion.
>
> Worship everything as God—every form is His temple. All else is delusion. Always look within, never without.[4]

To look within and find out the King of kings is to visualise everything and everyone in the society that cherishes the vision of man the excellent and always advancing towards ascent and development. Under such a state of mind educated with the best principles and procedures of making the whole society as a cordial platform of love and togetherness, the religion of man becomes an enviable and emulating reality.

Deeply wounded by innumerable oppression of castes in the society, Vivekananda has waged a war against all narrowness of mind by the spirit of the Vedanta which is in everyone and everywhere. Explaining the concept of the spirit of the Vedanta that upholds the unity of all existence in the whole society of mankind, he clarifies how the new education of inward manifestation would bring about a radical change of the vision of man the Divine inhabitant in every society:

> If one man touches another man's food, he cries out, "Lord help me, I am polluted!" when I returned to India after my visit to the West, several orthodox Hindus raised a howl against my association with the Western people and my breaking the rules of orthodoxy. They did not like me to teach the truths of the Vedas to the people of the West.

> But how can there be these distinctions and differences? How can the rich man turn up his nose at the poor man, and the learned at the ignorant, if we are all the spirit and all the same? Unless society changes, how can such a religion as Vedanta prevail? It will take thousands of years to have large numbers of truly rational human beings. It is very hard to show men new things, to give them great ideas. It is harder still to knock off old superstitions, very hard; they do not die easily. With all his education, even the learned man becomes frightened in the dark—the nursery tales come into his mind, and he sees ghosts.
>
> The meaning of the word "Veda", from which the word "Vedanta" comes, is knowledge. All knowledge is Veda, infinite as God is infinite. Nobody ever creates knowledge. Did you ever see knowledge created? It is only discovered—what was covered is uncovered. It is always here, because it is God Himself. Past, present, and future knowledge, all exist in all of us. We discover it, that is all. The Vedas are a great Sanskrit book. In our country we go down on our knees before the man who reads the Vedas, and we do not care for the man who is studying physics. That is superstition; it is not Vedanta at all. It is utter materialism. With God every knowledge is sacred. Knowledge is God. Infinite knowledge abides within every one in the fullest measure. You are not really ignorant, though you may appear to be so. You are incarnations of God, all of you. You are the incarnations of the Almighty, Omnipotent, Divine Principle. You may laugh at me now, but the time will come when you will understand. You must. Nobody will be left behind.[5]

To visualise man as God in the society is one of the greatest hallmarks of Vivekananda's philosophy of education of love. For such visualisation the role of education as an infinite force of love for transcendence and transparency with devotion to the highest knowledge that brings forth oneness with the All Serene. Analysing the common role of the intellect in the society where the lesson of love is terribly ignored and jeopardised under the fashionable and romantic garb of religion, and where the image of God is limited with the vision of narrowness and is never allowed to be hallowed with the truth of sense and sensibilities, he significantly observes:

> Religion is realisation, and you must make the sharpest distinction between talk and realisation. What you perceive in your soul is realisation. Man has no idea of the Spirit, he has to think of it with the forms he has before him. He has to think of the blue skies, or the expansive fields, or the sea, or something huge. How else can you think of God? So what are you doing in reality? You are talking of omnipresence, and thinking of the sea. Is God the sea? A little more common sense is required. * * * We are by our present constitution limited and bound to see God as man. If the buffaloes want to worship God, they will see Him as a huge buffalo. If a fish wants to worship God, it will have to think of Him as a big fish. You and I, the buffalo, the fish, each represents so many different vessels. All these go to the sea to be filled with water according to the shape of each vessel. In each of these vessels is nothing but water. So with God. When men see Him, they see Him as man, as the animals as animal—each according to his ideal. That is the only way you can see Him; you have to worship Him as man, because there is no other way out of it. Two classes of men do not worship God as man—the human brute who has no religion, and the Paramahansa (highest Yogi) who has gone beyond humanity, who has thrown off his mind and body and gone beyond the limits of nature. All nature has become his Self. He has neither mind nor body, and can worship God as God, as can a Jesus or a Buddha. They did not worship God as man. The other extreme is the human brute. You know two extremes look alike. Similar is the case with the extreme of ignorance and the other extreme of knowledge; neither of these worships anybody. The extremely

> ignorant do not worship God, not being developed enough to feel the need for so doing. Those that have attained the highest knowledge also do not worship God—having realised and become one with God. God never worships God. Between these two poles of existence, if anyone tells you he is going to worship God as man, take care of him. He is an irresponsible talker, he is mistaken; his religion is for frothy thinkers, it is intellectual nonsense.[6]

To be common and nice people nourishing and exchanging mutual love in the society is one of the essential components of love and this is what Vivekananda has time and again advised us to follow in devotion and dedication. In fact, quite opposed to Western societies, he refers to the fact that there is no secret society in India.

Vivekananda also reminds us that there is no room for displaying or exercising false love of mystery in the society. The education that allows any society to cultivate such mystery leaves apart the essence of education and toys with extravagant and unscientific matters which have nothing to contribute to the education of the mind and the heart. As an introspective visionary of love in relation to society and vice versa, Vivekananda unfolds the true nature and role of the secret society, a product of the West and never to be found in the East, that does more harm than good for the individual as the great contributor of good sense and sensibilities to the society:

> If there were a devil, I would look for him within a secret society—as the invention of secret societies. They are diabolical schemes. The Ishta is *sacred*, not secret. But in what sense? Why should I not speak of my Ishta to others? Because it is my most holy thing. It may help others, but how do I know that it will not rather hurt them? There may be a man whose nature is such that he cannot worship a Personal God, but can only worship as an Impersonal God his own highest Self. Suppose I leave him among you, and he tells you that there is no Personal God, but only God as the Self

> in you or me. You will be shocked. His idea is sacred, but not secret. There never was a great religion or a great teacher that formed secret societies to preach God's truths. There are no such secret societies in India. Such things are purely Western in idea, and merely foisted upon India. We never knew anything about them. Why indeed should there be secret societies in India? In Europe, people were not allowed to talk a word about religion that did not agree with the views of the Church. So they were forced to go about amongst the mountains in hiding and form secret societies, that they might follow their own kind of worship. There was never a time in India when a man was persecuted for holding his own views on religion. There were never secret societies in India, so any idea of that sort you must give up at once. These secret societies always degenerate into the most horrible things. I have seen enough of this world to know what evil they cause, and how easily they slide into free love societies and ghost societies, how men play into the hands of other men or women, and how their future possibilities in thought and act are destroyed, and so on. Some of you may be displeased with me for talking in this way, but I must tell you the truth. Perhaps only half a dozen men and women will follow me in all my life; but they will be real men and women, pure and sincere, and I do not want a crowd. The history of the world was made by a few dozens, whom you can count on your fingers, and the rest were a rabble. All these secret societies and humbugs make men and women impure, weak, and narrow; and the weak have no will, and can never work. Therefore, have nothing to do with them. All these false love of mystery should be knocked on the head the first time it comes into your mind.[7]

To rise above the narrowness of physical comfort and care and to sacrifice all earthly happiness and pleasure are the first lessons of being social. Life in this world is transitory.

Happiness and comfort are also transitory and all selfishness would definitely end in misery and dwarf the very dignity and worth of man as the best creature of the world. Vivekananda, therefore, inspires every one of us to rise above physical pleasure and happiness and, like a true devotee, sacrifice everything for the well-being of the society. That is the important lesson we normally fight shy of in our day-to-day careless mode of living.

For a true partner to the other persons in the society in and around us, the mission of mutual love and sympathy can alone lead us to supreme devotion. The perfect devotee's nature of devotion is illumined with this lesson love towards others in the society even at the risk of death and destruction. The person thus promised with the contemplation, planning and execution of social involvements in which every 'we' becomes 'I' and vice versa, proves the fact that he never cares any constraint in his love for everyone in the society. That is the essence of education of love and society.

Vivekananda has made a very clear and explicit explanation on the above as follows:

> It is the horrible body-idea that breeds all the selfishness in the world, just this one delusion that we are wholly the body we own, and that we must by all possible means try our very best to preserve and to please it. If you know that you are positively other than your body, you have then none to fight with or struggle against; you are dead to all ideas of selfishness. So the Bhakta declares that we have to hold ourselves as if we are altogether dead to all the things of the world; and that is indeed self-surrender. Let things come as they may. This is the meaning of "Thy will be done"—not going about fighting and struggling and thinking all the while that God wills all our own weaknesses and worldly ambitions. It may be that good comes even out of our selfish struggles; that is, however, God's look-out. The perfected Bhakta's idea must be never to add work for himself. "Lord, they

> build high temples in Your name; they make large gifts in Your name; I am poor. I have nothing; so I take this body of mine and place it at Your feet. Do not give me up, O Lord." Such is the prayer proceeding out of the depths of the Bhakta's heart. To him who has experienced it, this eternal sacrifice of the self unto the Beloved Lord is higher by far than all wealth and power, than even all soaring thoughts of renown and enjoyment. The peace of the Bhakta's calm resignation is a peace that passeth all understanding and is of incomparable value. His Apratikulya is a state of mind in which it has no interests and naturally knows nothing that is opposed to it. In this state of sublime resignation everything in the state of attachment goes away completely, except that one all-absorbing love to Him in whom all things live and move and have their being.[8]

To raise the society on the platform of mutual love and sympathy is to raise oneself to the desirable excellence of human sensibilities. Undeniably, the education that prepares one to raise oneself in the best possible way for this purpose not only heralds the glory of the society but also upholds and advances the march of man and civilisation.

To grow with love as Vivekananda appropriately shows the way is to grow with the feeling of and involvement in the education of how to be worthy of the society. Outright criticism and condemnation only aggravate passivity and nihilism. Under such circumstances, Vivekananda's invaluable observation as follows would definitely be a very useful and introspective guideline:

> The more we grow in love and virtue and holiness, the more we see love and virtue and holiness outside. All condemnation of others really condemns ourselves. Adjust the microcosm (which is in your power to do) and the macrocosm will adjust itself for you. It is like the *hydrostatic paradox*, one drop of water can balance the universe. We cannot see outside what we cannot

> see inside. The universe is to us what the huge engine is to the miniature engine; and indication of any error in the tiny engine leads us to imagine trouble in the huge one.

Every step that has been really gained in the world has been gained by love; criticising can never do any good, it has been tried for thousands of years. Condemnation accomplishes nothing.[9]

Do we really believe and introspect?

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4

Education of Love and Humanism: Vivekananda's Beckoning

Education is an identity of man introspective or otherwise. It tells about him, endears him with others living far or near, within or outside and makes a bond between him and others so much so that he lives apart from others and yet remains absolutely concerned about others because he is an inseparable partner to the cause of others for himself and vice versa. The fountain as it were of humanism springs from love.

An ever abiding and loving inspirer of humanism, Swami Vivekananda, beckons us with the vibrant spirit of humanism that is always tinged with the mellow touch of love. For him, living for loving is humanism. It is having in the real sense of the term, and not acquiring the so-called wealth and wisdom, happiness and prosperity with which we are satisfied in life. If life becomes such a cheap bearing of human existence, it loses the true spirit of humanism which teaches us the lesson of how to love others in order to be loved and how to make the worth of life really valuable in learning and continually practising how to sacrifice life for the welfare of total humankind.

The education of love and humanism, therefore, always stands as a living symbol of man's identity in serene unison and accomplishment. Why do we live? Wherefrom do we get the sustenance and enrichment of life? How can the life of every living being be useful to others? How should one be justified in the true manifestation of self-sacrifice for the well-being of others? All these and allied other questions come under the purview of education of love and humanism. Vivekananda goes deep into the matter of each and every enquiry of human life and through a thorough probe into each and every component of human askance arrives at the essence of humanism where the lesson and contribution of love to the excellence and ascent of humanism become explicit and significant. His concern for humanism is directly related to love. If love does not play the vital role of the beckoning of humanism and vice versa, the whole purpose of education of love turns out to be meaningless.

Admittedly, Vivekananda does not give importance to learning and practising the lesson of love dissociated from human excellence. As his God lies in man who, according to him, is All Love, the education for human development is always dependent on and enriched with the education in theory and practice of love in diverse directions. As such, love holds the supreme position in the wholeness of man as a divine being. The service of man towards man is actually a lesson that should begin with and end in love. Ultimately, man becomes All Love, which means that the aims and objectives of education of love are successfully revealed and accomplished in living and not in dull and drab hollowness of abstractions that are more often than not served as veiled ornaments of the religion and lesson of humanism.

Vivekananda never deals with love in abstraction in the lesson of learning and acquiring the true spirit of humanism. His pathways are clear and distinct. He simply regards the education of love as the most essential vehicle of what actually humanism is and how it should be exercised so that the identity of man as the embodiment of All Love is never at cross-roads with simplicity and modesty as the two very significant components of human excellence. The more we are concerned with the education of humanism in terms of these two components which are also the components of true love, the more are we on the right track of learning and disseminating the glory of man.

Vivekananda comes closest to humanistic interpretation of All Love in the aesthetic and mystical semblance of All Love. He cares for the beckoning of humanism which permeates love in truth, beauty and goodness, and the perfumes of promise it bears as an identity are enlivened and enshrined in love.

To serve humanity and at the same time bring light into the world are the two principal ends in view of Vivekananda's philosophy of education of love. He heightens the lesson of the service to humans as service to the All Love as he believes and translates the truth into reality that every human being irrespective of caste, creed, community etc., is the living embodiment of God. As such, service to mankind should always bear the definite stamp of total elimination of self-interest and rewards. The only reward is extinction of personality which escalates humanism in the radiance of pure and crystallized poignancy of love. As he characteristically advises:

> You cannot help anyone, you can only serve: serve the children of the Lord, serve the Lord Himself, if you have the privilege. If the Lord grants that you can help anyone of His children, blessed you are; do not think too much of yourselves. Blessed you are that the privilege was given to you when others had it not. Do it only as a worship. I should see God in the poor, and it is for my salvation that I go worship them. The poor and the miserable are for our salvation, so that we may serve the Lord, coming in the shape of the diseased, coming in the shape of the lunatic, the leper, and the sinner! Bold are my words; and let me repeat that it is the greatest privilege in our life that we are allowed to serve the Lord in all these shapes. Give up the idea that by ruling over others you can do any good to them. But you can do just as much as you can in the case of the plant; you can supply the growing seed with the materials for the making up of its body, bringing to it the earth, the water, the air, that it wants. It will take all that it wants by its own nature, and it will assimilate and grow by its own nature.

> Bring all light into the world. Light, bring light! Let light come unto every one; the task will not be finished till every one has reached the Lord. Bring light to the poor; and bring more light to the rich, for they require it more than the poor. Bring light to the ignorant, and more light to the educated, for the vanities of the education of our time are tremendous! Thus bring light to all and leave the rest unto the Lord, for in the words of the same Lord, "To work you have the right and not to the fruits thereof." "Let not your work produces results for *you*, and at the same time you may never be without work."[1]

To feel the pulse of every one of the down-trodden and despised humanity with the education of love is the most urgent need of the world right now. Vivekananda felt this more than a hundred years ago. As a foreseer of the education of love and humanism he has categorically expressed his profound feelings and experiences as follows:

> Let each of us pray day and night for the down-trodden millions in India who are held fast by poverty, priestcraft, and tyranny—pray day and night for them. I care more to teach religion to them than to the high and the rich. I am no metaphysician, no philosopher, nay, no saint. But I am poor, I love the poor. I see what they call the poor of this country, and how many there are who feel for them! What an immense difference in India! Who feels there for the two hundred millions of men and women sunken for ever in poverty and ignorance? Where is the way out? Who feels for them? They cannot find light or education. Who will bring the light to them—who will travel from door to door bringing education to them? Let these people be your God—think of them, work for them, pray for them incessantly—the Lord will show you the way. Him I call a Mahatman(great soul) whose heart bleeds for the poor, otherwise he is a Duratman(wicked soul). Let us unite our wills in continued prayer for their good. We may die unknown, unpitied, unbewailed,

> without accomplishing anything—but not one thought will be lost. It will take effect, sooner or later. My heart is too full to express my feeling; you know it, you can imagine it. So long as the millions live in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor who, having been educated at their expense, pays not the least heed to them! I call those men who strut about in their finery, having got all their money by grinding the poor, wretches, so long as they do not know anything for those two hundred millions who are now no better than hungry savages![2]

The quest for light in order to love everyone near or far is the genesis of humanism. The light of education is the only answer to empower and enrich human life an civilisation. How can we exercise that light? Who will be our immediate clientele for that education of light? Let us follow the beckoning of Swami Vivekananda:

> We become forgetful of the ego when we think of the body as dedicated to the service of others—the body with which most complacently we identify the ego. And in the long run comes the consciousness of disembodiedness. The more intently you think of the well-being of others, the more oblivious of the self you become. In this way, as gradually your heart gets purified by work, you will come to feel the truth that your own Self is pervading all beings and all things. Thus it is that doing good to others constitutes a way, a means of revealing one's own Self or Atman. Know this also to be one of the spiritual practices, a discipline for God-realisation. Its aim also is Self-realisation. Exactly as that aim is attained by Jnana(knowledge), Bhakti(devotion) and so on, also by work for the sake of others. [3]

The education of self-realisation for the cause of love and humanism is the hallmark of Vivekananda's philosophy of education. His vision of education that cares and upholds truth under all circumstances is the only way to learn the lesson of love that teaches boldness, righteousness, and inspires us to be radical and iconoclastic. That education is the spirit of truth that reflects humankind to rise above all temptations and inconsistencies, all superstitions and prejudices, strengthens the spirit of love that never yields to ignorance and selfishness.

Naturally, Vivekananda welcomes us to welcome education of love and light, humanism and Absolute Knowledge, Existence and Bliss:

> I cannot believe in the self-contradictory statement that light brings greater darkness. It is like losing life in the ocean of Sachchidananda, in the ocean of Absolute Existence and Immortality. How absurd! Knowledge means freedom from the errors which ignorance leads to. Knowledge paving the way to error! Enlightenment leading to confusion! Is it possible? Men are not bold enough to speak out broad truths, for fear of losing the respect of the people they try to make a compromise between the real, eternal truths and the nonsensical prejudices of the people, and thus set up the doctrine that Lokacharas(customs of the people) and Deshacharas(customs of the country) must be adhered to. No compromise! No whitewashing! No covering of corpses beneath flowers! Throw away such texts as, *tathapi lokachara*—yet the customs of the people have to be followed. Nonsense! The result of this sort of compromise is that the grand truths are soon buried under heaps of rubbish, and the latter are eagerly held as real truths. Even the grand truths of the *Gita*, so boldly preached by Shri Krishna, received the gloss of compromise in the hands of future generations of disciples, and the result is that the grandest scripture of the world is now made to yield many things which lead men astray.
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> This attempt at compromise proceeds from arrant downright cowardice. Be bold! My children would be brave, above all. Not the least compromise on any account. Preach the highest truths broadcast. Do not

> fear losing your respect or causing unhappy friction. Rest assured that if you serve truth in spite of temptations to forsake it, you will attain a heavenly strength in the face of which men will quail to speak before you things which you do not believe to be true. People will be convinced of what you will say to them if you can strictly serve the truth for fourteen years continually, without swerving from it. Thus you will confer the greatest blessing of the masses, unshackle their bondages, and uplift the whole nation.[4]

The essence of humanism in terms of love and vice versa, therefore, always looks forward to highlighting truth and preparing the masses for the excellence of truth. If truth turns out to be falsehood in course of exercise, the very foundation of knowledge then necessitates a total overhauling, where love acts as a guiding spirit of human endeavour. Besides making truth the essence of our knowledge and wisdom, and applicable to the progress of mankind, the concept of the co-existence between God and all living beings must be the end in view of education of love and humanism. This would accelerate all our good thoughts and intentions for making every life as precious and honourable as the vision of the All Serene we adore and honour anywhere and everywhere.

Vivekananda advocates the vision of the Brahman in the concept of God as above and goes further to the fact that the concept of the individual, besides being an inseparable part of the unit of individuals, is beyond that. Obviously, this advances the education of love and freedom to an enviable height. As he poignantly elucidates:

> Ishwara is the sum total of individuals, yet He is an individual, as the human body is a unit, of which each cell is an individual. Samasthi or collected equals God; Vyasti or analysed equals the Jiva. The existene of Ishwara, therefore, depends on Jiva, as the body on the cell, and vice versa. Thus Jiva and Ishwara are co-existent beings; when one exists, the other must. Also, because, except on our earth, in all the higher spheres,

> the amount of good being vastly in excess of the amount of evil, the sum total(Ishwara) may be said to be all-good. Omnipotence and omniscience are obvious qualities and need no argument to prove from the very fact of totality. Brahman's beyond both these and is not a conditioned state; it is the only Unit not composed of many units, the principle which runs through all from a cell to God, without which nothing can exist; and whatever is real is that principle, or Brahman. When I think I am Brahman, I alone exist; so with others. Therefore, each one is the whole of that principle.[5]

The education of humanism in terms of love also relates to awakening and exercising strong and pure will. This consolidates and enriches the force of love that must go out to humanity in all directions. At the same time, restoration of the faith of an individual with pure and sound education of the head and the heart is also necessary for advancement of humanism. This brings forth a firm conviction of truth and respect for the Self.

Vivekananda beckons the spirit of humanism in the education of love that transpires the truth of self-identity in terms of understanding the Atman, the great potent force of human ascent. As he characteristically asserts:

> You must go out to preach your religion, preach it to every nation under the sun, preach it to every people. This is the first thing to do. And after preaching spiritual knowledge, along with it come that secular knowledge and every other knowledge that you want; but if you attempt to get the secular knowledge without religion, I tell you plainly, vain is your attempt in India, it will never have a hold on the people. Even the great Buddhistic movement was a failure, partially on account of that.
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> Therefore, my friends, my plan is to start institutions in India, to train our young men as preachers of the truths of our scriptures in India and outside India.

> Men, men, these are wanted; everything else will be ready, but strong, vigorous, believing young men, sincere to the backbone are wanted. A hundred such and the world becomes revolu-tionalised. The will is stronger than anything else. Everything must go down before the will, for that comes from God and God Himself; a pure and a strong will is omnipotent. Do you not believe in it? Preach, preach unto the world the great truths of your religion; the world waits for them. For centuries people have been taught theories of degradation. They have been told that they are nothing. The masses have been told all over the world that they are not human beings. They have been so frightened for centuries, till they have nearly become animals. Never were they allowed to hear of the Atman. Let them hear of the Atman—that even the lowest of the low have the Atman within, which never dies and never is born—of Him whom the sword cannot pierce, nor the fire burn, nor the air dry—immortal, without beginning or end, the all-pure, omnipotent, and omnipresent Atman! [6]

Vivekananda clarifies the vision of humanism in terms of the education of love from threefold point of view, which upholds education from an altogether new dimension of human ascent and excellence. No human being, however prepared to serve humanity is on the right track of his vision unless the love that he exercises is strengthened by an inward feeling of togetherness.

Again, mere feeling for humankind does not always serve the real purpose of negotiating the ukase in every human mind. What is wanted is the education of love for involvement of the right kind and of the right mind. Therefore, all humanistic endeavour should prove its worth through activities well crystallised in the education of love for refinement of human sensibilities. Besides, the education that is needed for such involvement should be supported by the right concept of service refined and filliped in the education of love in judicious action through intellectual exercise.

Vivekananda categorically asserts the threefold purpose of the education of love for advancement of humanism as follows:

> We need to have three things; the heart to feel, the brain to conceive, the hand to work. First we must go out of the world and make ourselves fit instruments. Make yourself a dynamo. *Feel* first for the world. At a time when all men are ready to work, where is the man of *feeling*? Where is the feeling that produced an Ignatius Loyola? Test your love and humility. The man is not humble for loving who is jealous. Jealousy is a terrible, horrible sin; it enters a man so mysteriously. Ask yourself, does your react in hatred or jealousy? Good works are continually being undone by the tons of hatred and anger which are being poured out on the world. If you are pure, if you are strong, *you, one* man, are equal to the whole world.
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> The brain to conceive the next condition of doing good works is only a dry Sahara after all; it cannot do anything alone unless it has the *feeling* behind it. Take love, which has never failed; and the brain will conceive, and the hand will work righteousness. Sages have dreamed of and have *seen* the vision of God. "The pure in heart shall see God." All the great ones claim to have *seen* God. Thousands of years ago has the vision been seen, and the unity that lies beyond has been recognised; and now the only thing we can do is to fill in these glorious outlines.[7]

To eliminate the difference between "you and I" and regard and restore "I" and "you" and vice versa are the essentials for understanding, appreciating and acting upon the sound and living foundations of Vivekananda's philosophy of education of love and humanism. He invites and encourages practice and dissemination of that education of love where the education of humanism makes definite inroads to freedom of mind and the heart where catholicity of vision is the angel of humanism. Oneness there is the ultimate end-in-view of perfection in education for humane sensibilities.

When Vivekananda harps on knowing the truth, freedom then serves as a guiding point of humanism. This freedom is the freedom of love that celebrates human ascent and excellence. Can there be more glorious upbringing of man in course of education? As a practical humanist in education of love, Vivekananda vibrantly advocates the merging of the little "I" into the greater "We" so that all actions might find a new meaning of freedom in the adoration of mutual love and sympathy. The education that encompasses and upholds the spirit of freedom in the love of humankind promises a grand marvel of human ascent and excellence. As he significantly observes:

> It is mistake to say, "you and I"; say "I". it is I who am eating in millions of mouths; how can I be hungry? It is I who am working through an infinite number of hands; how can I be inactive? It is I who am living the life of the universe; where is death for me? I am beyond all life, beyond all death. Where shall I seek for freedom? I am free by my nature. Who can bind me—the God of this universe? The scriptures of the world are but little maps, wanting to delineate my glory, who am the only existence of the universe. Then what are these books to me? Thus says the Advaitist.
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> "Know the truth and be free in a moment." All the darkness will then vanish. When man has seen himself as one with the Infinite Being of the universe, when all separateness is ceased, when all men and women, all gods and angels, all animals and plants, and the whole universe have melted into that Oneness, then all fear disappears. Can I hurt myself? Can I injure myself? Whom to fear? Can you fear yourself? Then will all sorrow disappear. What can cause me sorrow? I am the One Existence of the universe. Then all jealousies will disappear; of whom to be jealous? Of myself? Then all bad feelings disappear. Against whom can I have bad feeling? Against myself? There is none in the universe but I, and this is the one way, says the Vedantist, to Knowledge. Kill out the differentiation, kill out the superstition that there are many.[8]

To be baptised in the education of love in the freedom of the self is to be justified to oneself in the best possible efflorescence of the All Serene. The education that teaches the lesson of self-assessment as one of the most important ends-in-view of humanism makes stable inroads to inner awareness which is the touchstone of the ascent of man. Vivekanada shows us the right avenue as adroitly revealed in one of his finest poems:

The sun goes down, its crimson rays
    Light up the dying day;
A startled glance I throw behind
    And count my triumph shame;
        No one but me to blame.
Each day my life I make or mar,
    Each deed begets its kind,
Good good, bad bad, the tide once set
    No one can stop or stem;
        No one but me to blame.
I am my own embodied past;
    Therein the plan was made;
The will, the thought, to that conform,
    To that the outer frame;
        No one but to blame.
Love comes reflected back as love,
    Hate breeds more fierce hate,
They mete their measures, lay on me
    Through life and death their claim;
        No one but me to blame.[9]

The education of love as reflected in the philosophy of humanism of Vivekananda is a rare testimony of the real nature of man. It penetrates deep into the subtlest enquries of humans not in a dogmatised and abstract fashion but in the heartening sympathy and`warm love of man towards everyone and everything, which ultimately bring forth a great truth, the vision of All Love highlighting universal humanism. As Vivekananda characteristically elucidates:

> We are all human beings, but are we all equal? Certainly not. Who says we are equal? Only the lunatic. Are we all equal in our brains, in our powers, in our bodies? One man is stronger than another, one man has more brain power than another. If we are all equal, why is there this inequality? Who made it? We. Because we have more or less powers, more or less brain, more or less physical strength, it must make a difference, between us. Yet we know that the doctrine of equality appeals to our heart. We are human beings; but some are men, some are women. Here is a black man, there is a white man; but all are men, all belong to one humanity. Various are our faces; I see no two alike, yet we all human beings. Where is this one humanity? I find a man or a woman, either dark or fair; and among all these faces I know that there is an abstract humanity which is common to all. I may not find it when I try to grasp it, to sense it, and to actualise it, yet I know for certain that it is there. If I am sure of anything, it is of this humanity which is common to all. It is through this generalised entity that I see you as a man or a woman.[10]

When would we earnestly respond to Vivekananda's beckoning?

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5

Education of Love and Spirituality: Vivekananda's Inwardness

Education is a quest—thrilling, unending and endearing. It is a look within for a look everywhere and beyond. It prepares us to advance and advance more. It summons us to be up and doing in the sacrifice of the self for the Supreme Self.

Education, as above, also shows us the avenue of inwardness. When Swami Vivekananda asserts it as a means of exercising spirituality, he emphasizes on this inwardness that paves the avenue of the real education we aspire after. In fact, true education is true spiritualism in the sense that it is justified to the vision and translation of inwardness in every human being everywhere. The culture of inwardness leading to the true spiritual vision is the fundamental end-in-view of Vivekananda's education of love. In highlighting the future of India from this standpoint, he categorically elucidates:

> My idea is first of all to bring out the germs of spirituality that are stored up in our books and in the possession of a few only, hidden, as it were, in monasteries and in forests—to bring them out; to bring the knowledge out of them, not only from the hands where it is hidden, but from the still more inaccessible chest, the language in which it is preserved, the incrustation of centuries of Sanskrit words. In one word, I want to make them popular. I want to bring out these ideas and let them be the common property of all, of every man in India, whether he knows the Sanskrit language or not. * * * It is culture that

> withstands shocks, not a simple mass of knowledge. You can put a mass of knowledge into the world, but that will not do much good. There must come culture into the blood. We all know in modern times of nations which have masses of knowledge, but what of them? They are like tigers, they are like savages, because culture is not there. Knowledge is only skin-deep, as civilization is, and a little scratch brings out the old savage. Such things happen; this is the danger. Teach the masses in the vernaculars, give them ideas; they will get information, but something more is necessary; give them culture. Until you give them that, there can be no permanence in the raised condition of the masses. There will be another caste created, having the advantage of the Sanskrit language, which will quickly get above the rest and rule them all the same. The only safety, I tell you men who belong to the lower castes, the only way to raise your condition is to study Sanskrit, and this fighting and writing and frothing against the higher castes is in vain, it does no good, and it creates fight and quarrel, and this race, unfortunately already divided, is going to be divided more and more. The only way to bring about the levelling of caste is to appropriate the culture, the education which is the strength of the higher castes. That done, you have what you want.[1]

Vivekananda introduces love for the education of spirituality in the indigenous way not because he wants simplicity at ease but essentially because he has a greater and more in-depth end-in-view. He wants diffusion of spirituality. Accordingly, his philosophy of spirituality is intrinsically intertwined with the spirit of love for spiritual knowledge that cares for universalism. As a matter of fact, his process of the education of spiritual love is the lesson that is imparted in silence and never in ukase amidst commonality. Thus a climate of educational harmony of global spiritual relationship is the forte in ascent of a spiritual world.

Vivekananda unfolds the truth of education for universal spiritual pursuit of love and coherence from the Indian perspective as follows:

> In this land of charity, let us take up the energy of the first charity, the diffusion of spiritual knowledge. And that diffusion should not be confined within the bounds of India; it must go out all over the world. This has been the custom. Those that tell you that Indian thought never went outside of India, those that tell you that I am the first Sannyasin who went to foreign lands to preach, do not know the history of their own race. Again and again this phenomenon has happened. Whenever the world has required it, this perennial flood of spirituality has overflowed and deluged the world. Gifts of political knowledge can be made with the blast of trumpets and the march of cohorts. Gifts of secular knowledge and social knowledge can be made with fire and sword. But spiritual knowledge can only be given in silence like the dew that falls unseen and unheard, yet bringing into bloom masses of roses. This has been the gift of India to the world again and again. Whenever there has been a great conquering race, bringing the nations of the world together, making roads and transit possible, immediately India arose and gave her quota of spiritual power to the sum total of the progress of the world. This happened ages before Buddha was born, and remnants of it are still left in China, in Asia Minor, and in the heart of the Malayan Archipelago. This was the case when the great Greek conqueror united the four corners of the then known world; then rushed out Indian spirituality, and the boasted civilization of the West is but the remnant of that deluge. Now the same opportunity has again come; the power of England has linked the nations of the world together as, was never done before. English roads and channels of communications rush from one end of the world to the other. Owing to English genius, the world today has been linked to such a fashion as has never before

> been done. Today trade centres have been formed such as have never been before in the history of mankind. And immediately, consciously or unconsciously, India rises up and pours forth her gifts of spirituality; and they will rush through these roads till they have reached the very ends of the world.[2]

The education of spirituality as Vivekananda emphasises, is always admission to and acceptance of the force of love that is within every human being. There is no commonness but variety, no absolute conviction of the All Love bereft of spirituality manifested in every being and representing the infinite spirit in all perfection. The knowledge received from the human soul is the great casket as it were of spirituality that can never be manifested unless the component of love builds the foundation of an embracing human relationship. Ultimately, all spirituality is the education of man in terms of the great bond of love for Knowledge, Existence and Bliss.

Moreover, the education of love well crystallised in spirituality highlights and disseminates the unique power of every human being who holds all knowledge not extrinsically but in his soul. The manifestation of that knowledge looks forward to making an unending quest for the best inroads of realisation in others as well. That builds a spiritual society faster and faster until the whole global society is adorned with the spell of love divine and eternal.

That all knowledge and all power are within and from the human soul is at the core of Vivekananda's philosophy of education of love in terms of spirituality and vice versa. In explaining the true nature of spirituality as revealed in the Vedanta, he refers to the role knowledge as a means of education that disclaims born superiority and privilege. This also strengthens love for Knowledge which is inseparable from Existence and Bliss one craves for perfection of manifestation as a unique entity:

> From what does this universe come, in what does it remain, to what does it go back? And the answer is: From love it comes, in love it remains, back it goes

unto love. Thus we are in a position to understand that, whether one likes it or not, there is no going back for anyone. Everyone has to get to the centre, however he may struggle to go back. Yet if we struggle consciously, knowingly, it will smooth the passage, it will lessen the jar, and quicken the time. Another conclusion we naturally arrive at from this is that all knowledge and all power are within and not without. What we call nature is a reflecting glass—that is all the use of nature—and all knowledge is this reflection of the within on this glass of nature. What we call powers, secrets of nature, and force, are all within. In the external world are only a series of changes. There is no knowledge in nature; all knowledge comes from the human soul. Man manifests knowledge, discovers it within himself, which is pre-existing through eternity. Everyone is the embodiment of Knowledge, everyone is the embodiment of eternal Bliss and eternal Existence. The ethical effect is just the same, as we have seen elsewhere, with regard to equality.

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If some persons think they know more of spirituality, of God, they claim a superior privilege over everyone else. They say, "Come down and worship us, ye common herds; we are the messengers of God, and you have to worship us." None can be Vedantists, and at the same time admit of the privilege to anyone, either mental, physical, or spiritual; absolutely no privilege for anyone. The same power is in every man, the one manifesting more, the other less; the same potentiality is in everyone. Where is the claim to privilege? All knowledge is in every soul, even in the most ignorant; he has not manifested it, but, perhaps, he has not had the opportunity, the environments were not, perhaps, suitable to him. When he gets the opportunity, he will manifest it. The idea that one man is born superior to another has no meaning in the Vedanta; that between two nations one is superior and

> the other inferior has no meaning whatsoever. Put them in the same circumstances, and see whether the same intelligence comes out or not. Before that you have no right to say that one nation is superior to another. And as to spirituality, no privilege should be claimed there. It is a privilege to serve mankind, for this is the worship of God. God is here, in all these human souls. He is the soul of man. What privilege can men ask? There are no special messengers of God, never were, and never can be. All beings, great or small, are equally manifestations of God; the difference is only in the manifestation. The same eternal message, which has been eternally given, comes to them little by little. The eternal message has been written in the heart of every being; it is there already, and all are struggling to express it. Some, in suitable circumstances, express it a little better than others, but as bearers of the message, they are all one. What claim to superiority is there? The most ignorant man, the most ignorant child, is as great a messenger of God as any that are yet to come. For the infinite message is there imprinted once for all in the heart of every being.[3]

Admittedly, a strong faith in love for all human beings is the most important component of education that promotes spirituality. Vivekananda respects the soul of every human being as an unparalleled spiritual force. This also heightens the spirit of All Love that is inherent in every one of us. What education plays its role in the efflorescence of spirituality is to see whether it is really eliminating all our petty little desires and expectations of life and strengthening the mind and the heart to readily accept and exercise self-denial and self-liberation to rise above the platform of the senses.

Vivekananda advises us to be always in the quest for the 'gold of the mind'—the gold that proves that the education of spirituality in terms of love is not beyond but within the reach of every one of us. Under the circumstances, there is practically no difference between man and All Love, and when that gold of the mind is achieved, the spiritual lesson learnt makes one disinterested in the self and promotes unison with all in the grand cathedral of the All Serene. As he characteristically suggests:

> When you think upon a problem, there is no sense-enjoyment there, but [the] exquisite delight of thought. .. .. ..It is that that makes the man. .. .. ..Take one great idea! It deepens. Concentration comes. You no longer feel your body. Your senses have stopped. You are above all physical senses. All that was manifesting itself through the senses is concerned upon that one idea. That moment you are higher than the animal. You get the revelation none can take from you—a direct perception of something higher than the body. .. .. ..Therein is the gold of mind, not upon the plane of the senses.
>
> Thus, working with the plane of the senses, you get more and more entry into the other regions, and then this world falls away from you. You get one glimpse of that spirit, and then your senses and your sense-enjoyments, your clinging to the flesh, will all melt away from you. Glimpse after glimpse will come from the realm of spirit. You will have finished Yoga, and spirit will stand revealed as spirit. Then you will begin the worship of God as spirit. Then you will begin to understand that worship is not to gain something. At heart, our worship was that infinite-finite element, love, which [is] an eternal sacrifice at the feet of the Lord by the soul. "Thou and not I. I am dead. Thou art, and I am not. I do not want wealth, nor beauty, no, nor even learning. I do not want salvation. If it be Thy will, let me go into twenty million hells. I only want one thing: Be Thou my love!"[4]

To go beyond the limit of the mind through the synthesis of love and spirituality is the essence of true education. Vivekananda advises us to promote that education for excellence and ascent in spirituality. His vision of spiritual endeavour is distinctly marked by three components. First, one should take recourse to the training of the mind in restraint of self-interest. The more one is oblivious of self-interest, the more is the catholic efflorescence of spirituality. Second, there must be a sustained and rigorous pursuit for training of the mind by means of education that cares to uphold the Omnipresent Atman. This leads education towards perfection of spirituality. Third, there must be an endless and untiring endeavour for awakening the inherent Brahman through identification of the spiritual power that allows one to eliminate all sham concepts of love where greed, pleasure, pain and other components stand in the way of realisation of the All Serene within oneself.

While analysing spirituality in terms of the realisation of the true nature of man as an embodiment of Brahman, Vivekananda exquisitely elucidates how the education of love for renunciation upholds the supreme nature and position of man the divine:

> Man can only think of his ideal as a human being. When buffeted by sorrows in this world of disease and death he is driven to desperation and helplessness, then he seeks refuge with someone, relying on whom he may feel safe. But where is that refuge to be found? The Omnipresent Atman which depends on nothing else to support. It is the only Refuge. At first man does not find that. When discrimination and dispassion arise in the course of meditation and spiritual practices, he comes to know it. But in whatever way he may progress in the path of spirituality, everyone is unconsciously awakening Brahman within him. But the means may be different in different cases. Those who have faith in the Personal God have to undergo spiritual practices holding to that idea. If there is sincerity, through that will come the awakening of the lion of Brahman within. The knowledge of Brahman is the goal of all beings but the various ideas are the various paths to it. Although the real nature of the Jiva is Brahman, still as he has identification with the qualifying adjunct of mind, he suffers from all sorts of doubts and difficulties,

> pleasure and pain. But everyone from Brahma down to a blade of grass is advancing towards the realisation of his real nature. [5]

Vivekananda's vision of spiritual advancement is deeply rooted to the aesthetics of inwardness where purity of mind and kindliness of heart. He considers education as an ardent and disciplined exercise where the role of spiritual poignancy totally depends on how to serve the entire humankind. For this, purity of heart is of great necessity. This makes easy and heartening inroads to inner spiritual excellence. As it is itself an aesthetic endeavour, the spiritual perfection that promises the ascent of man also eliminates the difference between man and God—Jiva and Shiva.

Admittedly, Vivekananda explicitly describes this aesthetic grandeur of spiritual education by referring to a popular story as follows:

> A rich man had a garden and two gardeners. One of these gardeners is very lazy and did not work; but when the owner came to the garden, the lazy man would get up and fold his arms and say, "How beautiful is the face of my master", and dance before him. The other gardener would not talk much, but would work hard, and produce all sorts of fruits and vegetables which he would carry on his head to his master who lived a long way off. Of these two gardeners, which would the more beloved of his master? Shiva is that master, and this world is His garden, and there are two sorts of gardeners here; the one who is lazy, hypocritical, and does nothing, only talking about Shiva's beautiful eyes and nose and other features; and the other, who is taking care of Shiva's children, all those that are poor and weak, all animals, and all His creation. Which of these would be the more beloved of Shiva? Certainly he that loves His children. He who wants to serve the father must serve His children—must serve all creatures in this world first. It is said in the Shastra that those who

> serve the servants of God are His greatest servants. So you will bear this in your mind.
>
> Let me tell you again that you must be pure and help any one who comes to you as much as lies in your power. And this is good Karma. By the power of this, the heart becomes pure(Chitta-shuddhi), and then Shiva who is residing in everyone will become manifest. He is always in the heart of every one. If there is dirt and dust on a mirror, we cannot see our image. So ignorance and wickedness are the dirt and dust that are on the mirror of our hearts. Selfishness is the chief sin, thinking of ourselves first. He who thinks, "I will eat first, I will have more money than others, and I will possess everything", he who thinks, "I will get to heaven before others, I will get Mukti before others" is the selfish man. The unselfish man says, "I will be last, I do not care to go to heaven, I will even go hell if by doing so I can help my brothers." This unselfishness is the test of religion. He who has more of this unselfishness is more spiritual and nearer to Shiva.[6]

The education of spirituality as Vivekananda elucidates above is further substantiated by the true nature and love for morality. Morality as such makes education abstract. It becomes living and nearest to spiritual excellence when the education of love for denial of the self, and, therefore unflinching devotion and adherence to altruism becomes natural, free and spontaneous.

Vivekananda explains the moralistic vision of love for spiritual education in the light of the Advaita philosophy and unfolds a unique avenue of how to make education a living and permanent preparation for self-identity in glowing terms of service to humans and self-sacrifice. In his own words of advice:

> Every religion teaches that the essence of all morality is to do good to others. And why? Be unselfish. And why should I? some God has said it? He is not for me.

> Some texts have declared it? Let them; that is nothing to me: let them all tell it. And if they do, what is it to me? Each one for himself, and somebody take the hindermost—that is all the morality in the world, at least with many. What is the reason that I should be moral? You cannot explain it except when you come to know the truth as given in the Gita: "He who sees everyone in himself, and himself in everyone, thus seeing the same God living in all, he, the sage, no more kills the Self by the self." Know through Advaita that whomsoever you hurt, you hurt yourself; they are all you. Whether you know it or not, through all hands you work, through all feet you move, you are the king enjoying in the palace, you are the beggar leading that miserable existence in the street; you are in the ignorant as well as in the learned, in are in the man who is weak, and you are in the strong; know this and be sympathetic. And that is why you must not hurt others. That is why I do not even care whether I have to starve, because there will be millions of mouths eating at the same time, and they are all mine. Therefore I should not care what becomes of me and mine, for the whole universe is mine, I am enjoying all the bliss at the same time; and who can kill me or the universe?[7]

Accepting and exercising religion as it ought to be in the supreme synchronisation of the education of love, Vivekananda shows us how the solid foundation of the religion of love teaches the lesson of excellence and ascent of spiritual grandeur. He never pays importance to external showmanship of spirituality. His concern is love. Love shows the true avenue of spiritual efflorescence. It is the true education that conforms and confirms our spiritual strivings. It is also the lesson to be free from all selfishness and narrow visions of life.

Vivekananda teaches us that lesson of spirituality which cares for love in and for renunciation. Therefore, the lesson of love for others is actually the most practical strategy of exploring and translating the lesson of love for oneself. This lesson of spirituality never allows negativism. A strong positive approach in every affair of life assures us how to be sincere in altruism which is the touchstone, as it were, of spiritual excellence.

Vivekananda spells out the above in his clarion call of doing away with the lesson of 'same-sightedness to all' that is poignant with the lesson of love for spiritual ascent:

> Out with the differentiation between man and woman —all is Atman! Give up the identification with the body, and stand up! Say, "Asti, Asti"—"Everything is!"—cherish positive thoughts. By dwelling too much upon "Nasti, Nasti"—"It is not! It is not!"(negativism), the whole country is going to ruin! "So'ham, So'ham, Shivo'ham"—"I am He! I am He! I am Shiva!" What a botheration! In every soul is infinite strength; and should you turn yourselves into cats and dogs by harbouring negative thoughts? Who dares to preach negativism? Whom do you call weak and powerless? "Shivo'ham, Shivo'ham"—"I am Shiva! I am Shiva!" I feel as if a thunderbolt strikes me on the head when I hear people dwell on negative thoughts. That sort of self-depreciating attitude is another name for disease—do you call that humility? It is vanity in disguise! "Na lingam dharmakaranang, samata sarvabhuteshu etanmuktasya laksanam—The external badge does not confer spirituality. It is same-sightedness to all beings which is the test of a liberated soul."[8]

The education of spirituality in terms of love and vice versa as Vivekananda observes, is the backbone of every race , every society, every nation and civilisation. There is hardly any room for materialism for the inner ascent of man. Therefore, when pleasure, happiness or allied other worldly desires engulf the mind with the cloud of darkness, spirituality then enjoys holidays in the life of man.

Vivekananda remarkably clarifies in detail this point of the importance of spiritual excellence through the education of love that makes life meaningful and worthwhile:

It has been said that too much attention to things spiritual disturbs our practical relations in this world. As far back in the days of the Chinese sage Confucius, it was said, "Let us take care of this world: and then, when we have finished with this world, we will take care of other world." It is very well said that we should *take care* of this world. But if too much attention to the spiritual may affect a little our practical relations, too much attention to the so-called practical hurts us here and hereafter. It makes us materialistic. For man is not to regard *nature* as his goal, but something higher.

Man is man so long as he is struggling to rise above nature, and this nature is both internal and external. Not only does it comprise the laws that governs the particles of matter outside us and in our bodies, but also the more subtle nature within, which is, in fact, the motive power governing the external. It is good and very grand to conquer external nature, but grander still to conquer our internal nature. It is grand and good to know the laws that govern the stars and planets; it is infinitely grander and better to know the laws that govern the passions, the feelings, the will, of mankind. This conquering of the inner man, understanding the secrets of the subtle workings that are within the human mind, and knowing its wonderful secrets, belong entirely to religion. Human nature—the ordinary human nature, I mean—wants to see big material facts. The ordinary man cannot understand anything that is subtle. Well has it been said that the masses admire the lion that kills a thousand lambs, never for a moment thinking that it is death to the lambs, although a momentary triumph for the lion; because they find pleasure only in manifestations of physical strength. Thus it is with the ordinary run of mankind. They understand and find pleasure in everything that is external. But in every society there is a section whose pleasures are not in the senses, but

> beyond, and who now and then catch glimpses of something higher than matter and struggle to reach it. And if we read the history of nations between the lines, we shall always find that the rise of a nation comes with an increase in the number of such men; and the fall begins when this pursuit after the Infinite, however vain Utilitarians may call it, has ceased. That is to say, the mainspring of the strength of every race lies in its spirituality, and the death of that race begins the day that spirituality wanes and materialism gains ground.[9]

When the death of a nation signifies that it has failed to provide its people with the adherence to and love for spiritual education, there is no denying the fact that Vivekananda alone has considered love for and exercise of spiritual education not only essential but also obligatory. This is why he has stressed on the study and exercise of the Self as the most important component of spiritual education.

Vivekananda advises us to exercise the power of discrimination in order to find out and establish truth in its best manifestation in forms of beauty, humility, purity and perfection. As an educational philosopher par excellence, he vibrantly calls us to visualise by means of learning the lesson of spirituality the catholic image of One Love:

> To be able to use what we call Viveka(discrimination), to learn how in every moment of our lives, in every one of our actions, to discriminate between what is right and wrong, true and false, we shall have to know the test of truth, which is purity, oneness. Everything that makes for oneness is truth. Love is truth, and hatred is false, because hatred makes for multiplicity. It is hatred that separates man from man; therefore it is wrong and false. It is a disintegrating power; it separates and destroys.
>
> Love binds, love makes for that oneness. You become one, the mother with the child, families with the city, the whole world becomes one with the animals.

> For love is Existence, God Himself; and all this is the manifestation of that One Love, more or less expressed. The difference is only in degree, but it is the manifestation of that One Love throughout. Therefore in all our actions we have to judge whether it is making for diversity or for oneness. If for diversity we have to give it up, but if it makes for oneness we are sure it is good. So with our thoughts; we have to decide whether they make for disintegration, multiplicity, or for oneness, binding soul to soul and bringing one influence to bear.[10]

When would we ardently respond to the lesson of spiritual inwardness in 'binding soul to soul' as Vivekananda highlights in his philosophy of education of love?

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6

Education of Love and Mysticism: Vivekananda's Quest

Education is a quest for fullness and beyond. It is an endless pursuit for purity and poignancy, catholicity and harmony for human existence and beyond that. How to bring about purity and er to be justified to the unlimited power of man who has the infinite capabilities to extend the horizon of excellence and ascent in course of continually crystallised vision of love that upholds education as an unparalleled mystic efflorescence.

As a connoisseur of mystic quest, Swami Vivekananda considers education as the most characteristic vehicle of fullness and beyond, where love plays the most fundamental role for marching beyond excellence and ascent. The education of love so tinged with the essence of mysticism as he marches ahead provides us with the unique philosophy of the voidless void which is the key to unfold the avenues of perfection beyond.

The mystic lesson of love for the sake of love as Vivekananda advocates is the highest form of divine love. It is this education which elevates the excellence of human worth. It is also the education which brings forth the prized madness of self-oblivion for the sake of perfect unison with the All Serene. In his own words:

> Freedom, Salvation, Nirvana—all are thrown away; who cares to become free while in the enjoyment of divine love? "Lord, I do not want wealth, nor friends, nor beauty, nor learning, nor even freedom; let me be

> born again and again, and be Thou ever my Love. Be Thou ever and ever my Love." "Who cares to become sugar?" says the Bhakta, "I want to taste sugar." Who will then desire to become free and one with God? "I may know that I am He; yet will I take myself away from Him and become different, so that I may enjoy the Beloved." That is what the Bhakta says. Love for love's sake is his highest enjoyment. Who will not be bound hand and foot a thousand times over to enjoy the Beloved? No Bhakta cares for anything except love; except to love and to be loved. His unworldly love is like the tide rushing up the river; this lover goes up the river against the current. The world calls him mad. I know one whom the world used to call mad, and this was his answer: "My friends, the whole world is a lunatic asylum. Some are mad after worldly love, some after name, some after fame, some after money, some after salvation and going to heaven. In this big lunatic asylum I am also mad, I am mad after God. If you are mad after money, I am mad after God. You are mad; so am I. I think my madness is after all the best." The true Bhakta's love is this burning madness before which everything else vanishes for him. The whole universe is to him full of love and love alone; that is how it seems to the lover. So when a man has this love in him, he becomes eternally blessed, eternally happy. This blessed madness of divine love alone can cure for ever the disease of the world that is in us.[1]

That the education of love is itself an education of mystic fulfilment is a new lesson that Vivekananda has for the first time introduced with all its practical experiments. His mysticism is never a fight beyond for nothingness, but an untiring endeavour to know and reach beyond the domain of consciousness for at least three purposes. First, there must be unison between the self and the Supreme Self where the trio of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute are christened in the spirit of the education of love. Second, with love as the backdrop of how to march beyond what is known and what is unknown, education teaches the lesson of completion in the infinite void of this universe. Third, that the lotus land of the All Serene is a quest eternal of love beyond love and such a lesson of love can neither be imparted nor calculated in transition or transfer as such but practised in intuition and transparency of self-involvements ceaselessly crystallised in self-ideation and marching beyond the void in absolute meditation which is referred as Samadhi.

In one of his celebrated poems, "The Hymn of Samadhi", Vivekananda describes this mystic concept of education of love as follows:

Lo! The sun is not, nor the comely moon,
All light extinct; in the great void of space
Floats shadow-like the image universe.

In the void of mind involute, there floats
The fleeting universe, rises and floats,
Sinks again, ceaseless, in the current "I".

Slowly, slowly, the shadow-multitude
Entered the primal womb, and flowed ceaseless,
The only current, the "I am", "I am".

Lo! 'Tis stopped, ev'n that current flows no more,
Void merged into void—beyond speech and mind!
Whose heart understands, he verily does.[2]

Elsewhere, with the undying spirit of mystic vision, Vivekananda makes a self-analysis of how love acts and reacts in and through the education of the 'one ever perfect soul' as he explains in "No one to Blame":

Love comes reflected back as love,

Hate breeds more fierce hate,

They mete their measures, lay on me

Through life and death their claim;

No one but me to blame.

I cast off fear and vain remorse,
I feel my Karma's sway
I face the ghosts my deeds have raised—
Joy, sorrow, censure, fame;
No one but me to blame.

Good, bad, love, hate, and pleasure, pain
Forever linked go,
I dream of pleasure without pain,
It never, never came;
No one but me to blame.

I give up hate, I give up love,
My thirst for life is gone;
Eternal death is what I want,
Nirvanam goes life's flame;
No one but me to blame.

One only man, one only God, one ever perfect soul,
One only sage who ever scorned the dark and dubious ways,
One only man who dared think and dared show the goal—
That *death* is curse, and so is *life*, and best when stops to be.[3]

Vivekananda also awakens the spirit of love as a mystic force. This lesson of love as a mystic force is clearly revealed in his exposure of the knowledge of the Brahman. He exposes the 'I' as an embodiment of universal mystic love and eyes everything as a mystic veil where is meant for advancement now to advancement beyond. The mystery of one's shadow ought to be manifested and crystallised in terms of education of love.

In the poem "An Interesting Correspondence", Vivekananda presents the lesson of the mystic force of love majestically:

Before the sun, the moon, the earth,
Before the stars or comets free,
Before e'en time has had its birth,
I was, I am, and I will be.

The beauteous earth, the glorious sun,
The calm sweet moon, the spangled sky,
Causation's law do make them run;
They live in bonds, in bonds they die.

And mind its mantle dreamy net
Cast o'er them all and holds them fast.
In warp and woof of thought are set,
Earth, hell, and heavens, or worst or best.

Know these are but the outer crust—
All space and time, all effect, cause.
I am beyond all sense, all thoughts,
The witness of the universe.

Not too or many, 'tis but one,
And thus in me all me's I have;
I cannot hate, I cannot shun
Myself from me, I can but love.[4]

As a mystic visionary of education of love, Vivekananda is very radical and down-to-earth. The importance of mystic inwardness to every discipline of human knowledge and experience is beyond all doubts and misgivings, misconceptions and misapprehensions. An ardent sense of love well translated in mysticism brings forth all the avenues of how to ascend beyond excellence.

Vivekananda's own observations and suggestions on the above are very simple and living:

> [If there is love], philosophy becomes poetry, psychology becomes [mysticism] and work the most delicious thing in creation. [By merely] reading books [one] becomes barren. Who becomes learned? He who can feel only one drop of love. God is love, and love is God. And God is everywhere. After seeing that God

> is love and God is everywhere, one does not know whether one stands on one's head or [on one's] feet—like a man who gets a bottle of wine and does not know where he stands. ...If we weep ten minutes for God, we will not know where we are for the next two months. ...We will not remember the times for meals. We will not know what we are eating. [How can] you love God and always be so nice and businesslike?
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> * * *
>
> [Worship Him as] the one you love as Love itself. There is one whose name is infinite Love. That is the only definition of God. Do not care if this ... universe is destroyed. What do we care as long as He is infinite love? [Do you] see what worship means? All other thoughts must go. Everything must vanish except God. The love the father or mother has for the wife, the friend for the friend—all these loves concentrated into one must be given to God.[5]

The mystic grandeur of education of love in symphony with extinction of personality as Vivekananda highlights provides humanism with a definite promise and perfection of the ascent and excellence of man whose thoughts and imaginations go beyond human askance and enquiry. As a matter of fact, he advises us on the role of the education of love beyond love that overlooks personal loss or gain and celebrates man the divine spirit and beyond that.

When Vivekananda speaks on the nature and realisation of the Atman the lesson of education that upholds mystic love beyond love, he actually wants every one of us to love and adore the great mystic truth that man is birthless, deathless, omnipotent, omniscient and ever victorious. As he knows no defeat, so nothing can arrest him, the Ever Glorious, who enjoys the endless spirit within and spirit beyond in the efflorescence of love in others and vice versa.

In analysing the mystic spirit of the practical Vedanta from the standpoint as above, Vivekananda's poignant advice is very significant and apposite:

> "This Atman is to be heard of." Hear day and night that you are that Soul. Repeat it to yourselves day and night till it enters into your very veins, till it tingles in every drop of blood, till it is in your flesh and bone. Let the whole body be full of that one ideal, "I am the birthless, the deathless, the blissful, the omniscient, the omnipotent, ever-glorious Soul." Think on it day and night; think on it till it becomes part and parcel of your life. Meditate upon it, and out of that will come work. "Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh," and out of the fullness of the heart the hand worketh also. Action will come. Fill yourselves with the ideal; whatever you do, think well on it. All your actions will be magnified, transformed, deified, by the very power of the thought. If matter is powerful, thought is omnipotent. Bring this thought to bear upon your life, fill yourselves with the thought of your almightiness, your majesty, and your glory.[6]

From the educational points of view, what Vivekananda wants love to be perfect and beyond that is to explore the nature of the lover and his mind who eliminates or replaces all his emotions by means of exercising within the diverse avenues of manipulation and control of the mind that cares for excellence, ascent and beyond all possible workings of the human mind in course of manipulation, strategic principles and policy perspectives called forth in unending exercise of correct and crystallised vision. This mystic dimension of education is particularly viable in case of religion where a broad-based backdrop of mystic sensibilities simply serves us with superb effulgence of evolutionary advancement.

Vivekananda adroitly elucidates the truth of the above in the following words of his own:

> Suppose you go to a sect which preaches love and emotion. They sing and weep, and preach love. But as soon as you say, "My friend, that is all right, but I want something stronger than this—a little reason and philosophy; I want to understand things step by step

and more rationally", they say, "Get out"; and they not only ask you to get out but would send you to the other place, if they could. The result is that that sect can only help people of an emotional turn of mind. They not only do not help others, but try to destroy them; and the most wicked part of the whole thing is that they will not only *not* help others, but do not believe in their sincerity. Again, there are philosophers who talk of the wisdom of India and the East and use big psychological terms, fifty syllables long, but if an ordinary man like me goes to them and says, "Can you tell me anything to make me spiritual?", the first thing they would do would be to smile and say, "Oh, you are too far below us in your reason. What can you understand about spirituality?" These are high-up philosophers. They simply show you the door. Then there are the mystical sects who speak all sorts of things about different planes of existence, different states of mind, and what the power of the mind can do, and so on; and if you are an ordinary man and say, "Show me anything that I can do; I am not much given to speculation; can you give me anything that will suit me?", they will smile and say, "Listen to that fool; he knows nothing, his existence is for nothing." And this is going on everywhere in the world. I would like to get extreme exponents of all these different sects, and shut them in a room, and photograph their beautiful derisive smiles!

This is the existing condition of religion, the existing condition of things. What I want to propagate is a religion that will be equally acceptable to all minds; it must be equally philosophic, equally emotional, equally mystic, and equally conducive to action. If professors from the colleges come, scientific men and physicists, they will court reason. Let them have it as much as they want. There will be a point beyond which they will think they cannot go, without breaking with reason. They will say, "These ideas of God and

> salvation are superstitious, give them up!" I say, "Mr. Philosopher, this body of yours is a bigger superstition. Give *it* up, don't go home to dinner or to your philosophic chair. Give up the body, and if you cannot, cry quarter and sit down." For religion must be able to show how to realise the philosophy that teaches us that this world is one existence in the universe. Similarly, if the mystic comes, we must welcome him, be ready to give him the science of mental analysis, and practically demonstrate it before him. And if emotional people come, we must sit, laugh, and weep with them in the name of the Lord; we must "drink the cup of love and become mad".[7]

Madness in love is the most prized efflorescence of education for mystic quest. It is that education which turns the whole world of humans into an unending quest for eternal consciousness and beyond that. It is to exercise education of love for the untiring adventure into the world of the mind and the sky of the heart. To make both ends in sync with purity of thought and action, contemplation and evaluation thereof is to make a thrilling and steadfast entry into the world of void wherefrom the erudition and the edification of what is beyond beckon in boundless promise of poignancy. Vivekananda unfolds that veil of mystic abundance in the learning and teaching of what is beyond and what prompts that beyond to build the cathedral of serenity in the evolution of consciousness.

For a perfect unison of education and mysticism, the quest which Vivekananda highlights and stimulates is one for love. Love acts like a guiding force in knowledge where the most important component is balance of the mind and the heart leading to unison with or representing the All-knowing.

To 'drink the cup of love' as Vivekananda advises in pursuing education of love for mystic fullness demands a certain form of extinction of personality. This means that education in terms of love allows us to delve deep into the world of knowledge and beyond in order to ascertain how far love is really translated for the good of others in justifying goodness to oneself in nothingness so far as the mystic spirit of altruism is concerned.

Vivekananda welcomes the education of love as a distinct and potent force of mystic serenity of mind where emancipation from all narrowness is the fundamental end-in-view of every form of educational endeavour. The triumph of the mind liberated from all constraints in education of love as a mystic force is actually a sojourn to begin with and also a march beyond.

In idealising and translating education of love as a characteristically mystic component for fullness and beyond that, Vivekananda makes no difference between knowledge and love—*Jnana* and *Bhakti*—and allows the two to be synchronised in all purity and perfection. As a mystic interpreter par excellence, he significantly spells out the education of love as follows:

> It is not given to all of us to be harmonious in the building up of our characters in this life; yet we know that character is of the noblest type in which all these three—knowledge and love and Yoga—are harmoniously fused. Three things are necessary for a bird to fly—the two wings and the tail as a rudder for steering. Jnana (Knowledge) is the one wing; Bhakti (Love) is the other, and Yoga is the tail that keeps up the balance. For those who cannot pursue all these three forms of worship together in harmony and take up, therefore, Bhakti alone as their way, it is necessary always to remember that forms and ceremonials, though absolutely necessary for the progressive soul, have no other value than taking us on to that state in which we feel the most intense love to God.

There is a little difference in opinion between the teachers of knowledge and those of love, though both admit the power of Bhakti. The Jnanis hold Bhakti to be an instrument of liberation, the Bhaktas look upon it both as the instrument and the thing to be attained.

> To my mind this is a distinction without much difference. In fact, Bhakti, when used as an instrument, really means a lower form of worship, and the higher form becomes inseparable from the lower form of realisation at a later stage. Each seems to lay a great stress upon his own peculiar method of worship, forgetting that with perfect love true knowledge is bound to come even unsought, and that from perfect knowledge true love is inseparable. [8]

Transcendence as an active and positive outcome of the education of love is the fountain of mystic ascent. For this truth, consciousness and all other components contributing to the liberation of the self from all narrowness make love refined and crystallised for the march beyond for the Holy Grail. Even illusion and reasoning are seasoned in the education of love that shows the avenue of the beginning of a history written anew and afresh with the facts of the acme of our quest for Knowledge, Existence and Bliss.

In one of his inspiring talks, Vivekananda the mystic vision of the education of love in a penetrating and illuminating analysis of consciousness:

> Consciousness is a bondage. The argument from design claims that intelligence precedes form; but if intelligence is the cause of anything, it itself is in its turn an effect. It is Maya. God creates us, and we create God, and this is Maya. The circle is unbroken; mind creates body, and body creates mind; the egg brings the chicken, the chicken, the egg; the tree the seed, the seed the tree. The world is neither entirely differentiated nor yet entirely homogeneous. Man is free and must rise above both sides. Both are right in their place; but to reach truth, "isness", we must transcend all that we know now of existence, will, consciousness, doing, going, knowing. There is no real individuality of the Jiva (separate soul); eventually it, as a compound, will go to pieces. Only that which is beyond further analysis is "simple", and that alone is truth, freedom,

> immortality, bliss. All struggles for the preservation of this illusive individuality are really vices. All struggles to lose this individuality are virtues. Everything in the universe is trying to break down this individuality, either consciously or unconsciously. All morality is based upon the destruction of separateness or false individuality, because that is the cause of all sin. Morality exists first; later religion confides it. Customs come first, and then mythology follows to explain them. While things are happening, they come by a higher law than reasoning; that arises later in an attempt to understand them. Reasoning is not the motive power, it is "chewing the cud" afterwards. Reason is the historian of the human being.[9]

The world of education in consonance with mystic love is the world beyond mere reasoning. It is to discover 'the sky beyond' That. The education of love for That looks forward to making an endless endeavour to uncover the void. In the poem "The Hymn to Creation" which Vivekananda has written to Sister Nivedita, this mystic quest is at its best:

Existence was not then, nor non-existence,
The world was not, the sky beyond was neither.
What covered the mist? Of whom was that?
What was in the depth of darkness thick?

Death was not then, nor immortality,
The night was neither separate from day,
But motionless did *That* vibrate
Alone, with Its own glory one—
Beyond *That* nothing did exist.

At first in darkness hidden darkness lay,
Undistinguished as one mass of water,
Then *That* which lay in void thus covered
A glory did put forth by *Tapah*![10]

Are we prepared for a journey beyond that in our quest for education of love as Vivekananda has pointed out above?

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Index

Advaita Philosophy 75
Advaitist 62
Altruism 39
Apratikulya 7, 50
Atman 15, 34, 56, 73, 86

Baptism 33
Barbarism 41
Bhakta 3, 7, 8, 36, 37, 49, 82
Bhakti 56, 90
Bondage 6, 13, 32
Brahman 12, 41, 59, 73, 84
Buddha 6, 26, 46, 68

Casteism 40
Cathedral of Serenity 89
Chandala 41
Child-marriage 6
China 68
Civilization of the West 68
Communicativeness 39
Component of
  Love 11
  Human Excellence 53
Confucius 78

Dedication 23
Deshacharas 57
Devotion 23
Discrimination and Dispassion 73
Divine 18, 44–45
Duratman 55

Education
  Dimension of 87
  Purpose of 32
  Role of 45
  Slovenly System of 23
Education for
  Humane Sensibilities 61
  Social and Humane Development 42
Education of
  Humanism 59
  Love 3, 4, 6, 11, 13, 18, 23, 34, 36, 37, 39, 52, 58, 63, 66, 73, 77, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 89, 92
Ekayana 30
Essence of
  Education 42
  Humanism 58
Eternal Peace 14
Evolution of Consciousness 89
Evolutionary Advancement 87
Exposure of Knowledge 84

Freedom 35–36, 81

Genesis of Humanism 56
Gita 5, 57

Human Ascent 62
Human Development 53
Humanism 17, 52, 53, 55, 56, 61, 62
Humanity 55
Hymn of Samadhi 83

Ideas of Progress 40
Ignorance and Inequality 28
Inwardness, Aesthetics of 74

Ishwara 58

Jesus 46
Jiva 73, 74, 91
Jivanmuktas 30
Jnana 28, 56, 90

Kindliness of Heart 74
Kingdom of Heaven 29
Krishna 8

Law of Causation 36
Libraries of the World 34
Lokacharas 57
Love
  for Freedom 27
  Definition of 16
Lunatic Asylum 37

Malayan Archipelago 68
Manifestation of Attraction 17
Man-making Theories 20
Materialism 43, 45
Mental Attitude 9
Misconce-ptions and Misapprehensions 85
Mystic Efflorescence 81
Mystic Visionary 20
Mysticism 81

Napoleon 5
Narrowness of Physical Comfort 48
Nature of Spirituality 69
Negativism 20
Nirvana 36, 81

Omnipresence 46
Oppression of Castes 44

Paramahansa 46
Philosophy of
  Education 1, 10, 14, 24, 41, 45, 61, 69
  Humanism 63
  Love 9
  Vedanta 19
Poignancy of Love 54
Positive Mysticism 20
Poverty of Magnanimity 3
Punishment 4
Purification of Mental Attitude 8
Purity of Mind 74
Purusha 18

Ramakrishna 18

Sachchidananda 57
Salvation 36, 81
Samadhi 83
Samasthi 58
Sankhya 1
Sannyasin 17, 68
Sati 6
Scientific Experiences 31
Secular Knowledge 68
Self-analysis 83
Self-freedom 27
Self-identity 75
Selfishness and Narrowness 32
Selflessness 33
Self-realisation 56
Self-sacrifice 5, 52, 75
Sentimentalism 23
Shiva 74
Shudra 41
Sister Nivedita 92
Sobriety of Love 13
Social Advancement 39
Social Knowledge 68
Social Ostracism 40
Social Reform 39, 40
Spirit of
  Humanism 59
  Love 84
Spiritual
  Advancement 2
  Education 79
  Energy 35
  Excellence 74, 77
  Growth 34
  Knowledge 67, 68

  Poignancy 74
  Relationship 67
  Society 69
  Vision 66
Spirituality 69

Talk and Realisation 46
Tibet 18
Translation of Inwardness 66
Tyranny 40

Universalism 67
Upanishads 20

Vedanta 14, 31, 44, 45, 70
Vedantists 70
Vedas 41
Vijnana 33
Vision of
  Altruis 3
  Freedom 19
  Humanism 60
  Love 14
  Spiritual Advancement 74
  Education 2
Viveka (discrimination) 79

Worship 4

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